AMERICA'S AMBASSADORS TO FRANCE

1777 – 1927

BECKLES WILLSON

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(1777—1927)

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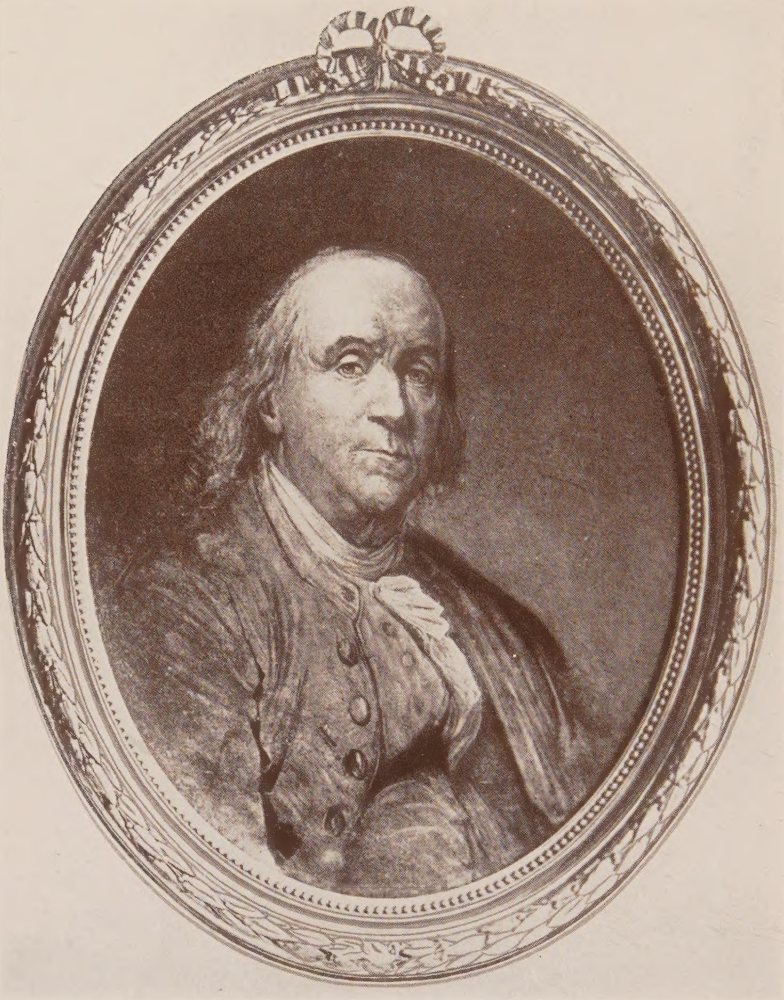

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.
From the portrait of Jean Baptiste Greuze in the possession of Edward Tuck, Esq.

AMERICA'S AMBASSADORS TO FRANCE
(1777—1927)

A NARRATIVE OF FRANCO-AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

BY BECKLES WILLSON, 1869—
AUTHOR OF "THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN PARIS," ETC.

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TO

EDWARD TUCK

GRAND OFFICER OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR

DOYEN OF THE AMERICAN COLONY

AND WORTHY TYPE AND EXEMPLAR OF

HIS COUNTRYMEN IN FRANCE

PREFACE

To-day, on the edge of Passy, within a stone's-throw of the spot where the first American Minister, Benjamin Franklin, set up his Legation in 1777, his bronze effigy benignantly from an arm-chair looks out over a neighbourhood which is, *par excellence*, the American quarter of Paris. For here are happily clustered most of the chief American associations and memorials of that brilliant capital wherein some thousands of good Americans choose to spend their days and to which the greatest amongst their countrymen seem destined to go, in bronze and marble, when they die.

In the foreground, in the Place d'Iéna, at the head of the stately Avenue du Président Wilson, rises the equestrian statue of Washington. On Franklin's right is the building of the American Embassy, close to its predecessor; on his left is the Place des États-Unis and the monument to the American volunteers who perished in France during the Great War. Just beyond is the busy Chancellery of the Embassy in that same Rue de Chaillot where it was established during the Second Empire; while down the Trocadéro slopes on an island in the Seine may be glimpsed a reduced but still imposing replica of Bartholdi's famous statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World."

This is not all; but it is enough. It is as if the spirit of the "Sage of Passy," even after a century and a half, is still potent to retain in this, his favourite quarter of Paris, the leading diplomatic and sentimental interests of his countrymen.

During that lengthy period (1777–1927) America has sent to France no fewer than thirty-seven Ministers and Ambassadors whose terms of office range from a single year to eight, men selected by the President for their high character and ability, their services to their party, and also because of their inclination towards France and their wealth and social

advantages. These distinguished envoys were usually, from their previous remoteness, disposed to regard France, French politics, institutions and society, from a fresh angle. They were, perhaps, from the peculiar nature of the Franco-American tradition, more completely acceptable to the French people than the diplomatic representatives of any other nation and were often, for this reason, able to move freely in circles which the envoys of other countries found far less congenial. Unlike these latter, the Americans were hardly ever professional diplomats and so were less hampered by forms and conventions, written or unwritten. In their official reports and private letters the picture they give of contemporary France, whether under Monarchy, Empire or Republic, is generally unprejudiced and detached. They see persons, events and tendencies as an Englishman or a European would not be apt to see them, while to their wives, sons and daughters the whole French scene is unusually vivid and stimulating, although sometimes it happened, as in the case of Mrs. Gallatin, that the influence of transatlantic Puritanism was too strong to make for perfect social sympathy.

It continues to be the amiable custom of successive American envoys to France, of the Presidents who appoint and accredit them, as well as of orators both in and out of Congress dwelling upon Franco-American relations, to speak of the "uninterrupted amity" between the two peoples since the first Treaty of 1778. This, one may observe, is hardly confirmed by a perusal of the official correspondence and a study of the diplomatic careers of past Ministers and Ambassadors on both sides of the Atlantic. There have been, in fact, a good many interruptions of amity, many alarming episodes and antagonisms between France and the United States, often involving great mental and moral strain, which has chiefly been borne by the well-disposed emissaries sent to Paris to uphold the moral and material interests of their country.

Indeed, it would not be untrue to say that, instead of any natural harmony and steady unity, there are, perhaps, no two countries in the universe where, in a profoundly different character and history, different ideas, customs and standards, different aims and interests, have ever tended, and still tend,

to sunder so widely. As much acrimonious controversy has taken place and as much heated passion been invoked upon occasion between France and America as between England and France, hereditary enemies, or even between modern France and Germany. True, only once has the dispute led to armed conflict, when, in the now half-forgotten naval war of 1799, some ninety French vessels were sunk; yet war was only narrowly averted in 1812, diplomatic relations were actually severed in 1835, and there have been several threatened ruptures since, notably over Texas and Mexico.

Nevertheless, happily, in the midst of the most inflamed controversies, there has always been one powerful sentimental factor to which the peace party amongst both peoples could make an unfailing appeal. It is the memory of the sympathy and succour which France lent the infant American Republic in its struggle for independence. In vain the basis of this debt has been repeatedly impugned, even before the time when an early Secretary of State, Thomas Pinckney, declared that the United States owed no gratitude to France, which "had aided the American Republic only in order to advance her own interests and secure her own safety." The legend, embellished by the picturesque figure of Lafayette, still holds as firmly as ever, and the force and sanctity of the bond then forged have not been diminished by later quarrels. It has rather been strengthened by time. Like that other international factor, the Anglo-American tradition, also a theme for oratory: a common blood and language and a joint heritage in Shakespeare and Blackstone: it will always be invoked, and successfully invoked, whenever material interests clash and national aims and claims appear for the moment irreconcilable.

From the archives of the Embassy which his Excellency the present Ambassador, Mr. Myron T. Herrick, has, with the sanction of the Department of State, very courteously placed at my disposal during a period of several months, I have derived the bulk of the official correspondence quoted in the ensuing narrative, from near the beginning to about the close of the past century. Amongst the many interesting episodes which emerge to which American historians have given rather less attention than they deserve, is Napoleon's

treatment of Minister Joel Barlow, whose melancholy death in an obscure Polish village, after he had vainly followed the Emperor across Europe, is one of the tragedies of modern diplomacy. Other passages describe the part taken by Minister W. C. Rives in the Revolution of 1830, when his influence was, rather surprisingly, exerted in favour of Louis Philippe and a monarchy; by Edward Livingston in the American Claims dispute of 1833–5; by Richard Rush in the Revolution of 1848; by Ministers Dayton and Bigelow during the American Civil War; and by Minister Washburne throughout the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune. Since the exciting mission of Gouverneur Morris during the first French Revolution no foreign envoy ever played so prominent a rôle as Washburne, although it might well have been rivalled by Ambassador Herrick had the Germans succeeded in capturing Paris in 1914.

In the chapter dealing with the post-war embassy of Mr. Hugh Campbell Wallace I have felt impelled to emphasize its importance, not yet fully realized by his countrymen. It was a period of dangerous and embarrassing reaction, when only a manifest sincerity, patience and an unfailing good-humour could have preserved that confidence which had just sustained the rudest of shocks and successfully have bridged the chasm between two antagonistic administrative policies at home.

Of the many who have generously aided me in my task I wish here to acknowledge a particular debt to Mr. Sheldon Whitehouse, Counsellor to the Embassy, and to my friend Mr. Warrington Dawson, Special Attaché of the Embassy. My thanks are also due to Mr. W. R. Castle, of the State Department, Washington; to Mr. Benjamin H. Conner, the President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Paris, whose library is rich in American history and biography; to Mr. Burton Stevenson, the accomplished Director of the American Library in Paris; to Mr. Weissenburg, the Embassy archivist; Mr. George C. Sharp (who placed his father's private papers at my disposal); Mr. W. C. Rives, of Washington; and last, but not least, to my venerable friend and kind counsellor, Mr. Edward Tuck, whose valuable Greuze portrait of Franklin is now for the first time reproduced, at the threshold of this volume.

B. W.

PARIS, *December* 1927.

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AMERICA'S AMBASSADORS TO FRANCE

CHAPTER I

FRANKLIN (1777–85)

In Paris, in the spring of 1777, *had curiosity or interest prompted one of the King's lieges to visit the chief representative of the new American nation he would have been directed to Monsieur Benjamin Franklin at the Hôtel de Valentinois in the pleasant suburb of Passy.*[1] *Arrived there by coach or diligence the visitor would have found a large mansion set in a spacious garden. The wings projected from the main building, each of which ended in a belvedere, or raised turret, supported by Tuscan columns. In the right wing was a lengthy salon, adorned with statues and busts; this and the principal part of the mansion was occupied by a prosperous merchant, M. Ray de Chaumont, and his family. The left wing, with a further suite of rooms on the ground-floor, had already achieved local celebrity—and was destined to achieve a kind of immortality, as the first American Legation in Paris, in France and in the world.*

At the entrance of this building a porter would have led the incomer (immediately he had declared his errand) to a crowded ante-room and bade him there await his turn. Around him he would have observed several persons who were obviously attorneys or entrepreneurs, one or two who might be merchants from the seaports; a sea-captain, a smart young military officer; two or three well-dressed youths, an elderly scholar;

[1] At first the Doctor was so cautious as to beg his correspondents to address him as Monsieur Francis, care of M. de Chaumont; But this was soon unnecessary; all Paris knew where the chief of the "Insurgents" was to be found.

certain outlandishly clad foreigners and one or two anxious-looking women in sober black.

One by one these are summoned and disappear and eventually the visitor is conducted into the presence of a stout, heavy-jowled old gentleman, bald as to the sinciput, yet with strands of lank grey hair falling upon his shoulders and with horn spectacles on his nose. His eyes would be noted as shrewd, his voice rather high-pitched and his expression placid and benevolent, as if it would take a great deal to disturb his tranquillity. The old gentleman is attired (as we see him on this particular morning) in a cinnamon suit and woollen stockings and is seated at a table.

Although he does not rise, he receives his visitor courteously, listens patiently to his account and then proceeds to assure him of his obligation for his sympathy with the American cause and for his generous offer of his sword, or (at a price) his silks, boots and muskets ; of his money to purchase a specified consignment of American tobacco or flour, or American wild lands ; or, mayhap, his regret at the conduct of an American creditor or an American privateer. At any rate, whatever the issue, a memorandum had just been made of it and the visitor will duly be informed what can be or has been done. The American representative then waves his hand towards another table and desk in the room whereat sits a very young gentleman scribbling away for dear life, dismisses his visitor with a bland smile which somehow silences any further importunities, and, ere the door again closes, is giving summary audience to another caller.

In some such wise was daily brought about the initiation of a more leisurely and ceremonious race into the swifter official methods of the new transatlantic republicans.

Yet stay !—should it chance that the visitor were a natural philosopher, a lady of quality, or even merely a pretty woman, his or her reception would scarce have been so expeditious. Dr. Franklin—for it was he—was never so busy that time could not be given to galvanism or to gallantry, and in such a case the customary routine of the Legation was informally suspended.

When, six months after the English Colonies in America had declared their independence, it was known that Congress had sent over the aged and illustrious Doctor Benjamin

Franklin as envoy there was a distinct feeling of relief among the friends of America in Europe.

Franklin was then the only living American with an international reputation. Even General Washington was barely known in Europe ; the orthography of his name was still fantastically presented in private letters and the public prints.[1] But fifteen years had passed since Franklin had been cordially received in Paris as philosopher, economist and wit, and had then made the acquaintance of almost the whole circle of the so-called " physiocrats," d'Alembert, Raynal, Cabanis, Buffon, Malesherbes, La Rochefoucauld, Mably and the rest, amongst whom he was respectfully mentioned in the same breath with Newton and Leibnitz. His *Poor Richard's Almanac* and *The Way of Wealth*, and some of his scientific papers had since been translated. A variety of useful inventions were, some of them justly, ascribed to him. He had continued to correspond with some of the most notable Frenchmen of the day. Such a man could hardly fail to play an important part on behalf of his country abroad.

Up to the moment of Franklin's arrival the cause of the United States had been making slow progress in Europe. The two chief agents, Silas Deane and Arthur Lee, had somehow got themselves hopelessly entangled in various schemes and not wholly creditable intrigues. The story of Beaumarchais and the semi-mythical Hortalez and Company may be read at large elsewhere. At nearly every seaport there were adventurers posing as American agents making contracts for supplies, or seeking to make them, and privateers eager to exploit the cause of the distant " Insurgents " to their own profit, while the French administration looked on complacently or secretly connived.

At Court, ever moving between Paris and Versailles, was the figure of the outraged British Ambassador, Lord Stormont, clamorously protesting against all these illicit proceedings and demanding that ships for America should not be loaded, or, if loaded, that they should not sail under pain of a rupture of Franco-British relations.

[1] Vasinton was a favourite : but a search reveals Vazhigton, Waginton and Vachintin.

It was therefore high time that a strong hand should take up the direction of American affairs. Franklin had finally reached Paris on December 21, 1776, with his two young grandsons and immediately took up lodgings at the Hôtel de Hambourg in the rue de l'Université where Silas Deane had for some time been staying. Lee, just returned from a secret mission to London, joined them there on the following day.

The Doctor's arrival quickly created all the sensation which had been expected. His old friends, the philosophers and scientists, greeted him as an illustrious member of their own set. The democrats and the republicans and political doctrinaires hailed him as one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. As for the young members of the French nobility, if they knew nothing of Franklin, they longed passionately for a war with their old enemy England, and wished for nothing better than a chance of fighting as commissioned officers in the American Army. These, therefore, only waited for an opportunity to swell the crowd of scholars, merchants, ship-captains and simple adventurers in the Doctor's ante-room and proffer their swords, their talents, and in some cases, their purses to the gratified chief agent of the revolting colonies. Dr. Franklin became, then, a prominent figure of the day, the reigning idol of Paris,[1] whose picture was in all the print-shop windows and whose sayings and doings formed a principal topic of conversation.

Amongst Franklin's acquaintances was an active and intelligent man of affairs from Blois, one of the farmers-general, who, although himself a *parvenu*, boasted many influential connections. M. Ray de Chaumont had a commodious mansion at Passy which had formerly belonged to the lively and beautiful Countess de Valentinois. He urged Franklin to accept his hospitality, to move his effects into a portion of this retired mansion, which should be set aside for his use, and from thence conduct his mission. The offer

[1] On the other side of the Channel it was otherwise. In London it was currently reported that he had fled from America to escape the ruin shortly to overtake his misguided country. Some of his oldest English friends shared this view, although Edmund Burke declared, "I never will believe that he is going to conclude a long life which has brightened every hour it contained with so foul and dishonourable a flight."

was accepted, and by March the doctor was quietly settled with his elder grandson, William Temple Franklin, under M. de Chaumont's roof.[1] Although he was generally spoken of as living "in retirement," the establishment which Franklin came eventually to maintain at the Hôtel de Valentinois was so generous that his fellow countryman John Adams, when he arrived in Paris, expostulated with him regarding it. He kept a carriage and a pair of horses, and servants enough to entertain handsomely any guests whom he chose to receive.

His grandson, William, only in his sixteenth year when they arrived at Passy, remained with his grandfather throughout his entire residence in France, acting generally as his private secretary. Other persons were employed from time to time in the clerical duties of the office; among them John Quincy Adams, who lent his assistance to his father, when he was but eleven years old. Child labour apparently excited no reprehension in the diplomatic circles of those days, and Congress had yet made no provision for an adult Secretary of Legation.

Franklin himself had been trained to business, and his official correspondence shows that the business of the legation was effectively carried on; but perfect orthography and calligraphy could scarcely be expected from a secretary of sixteen, and it is to be feared that in the transaction of large and complicated affairs there came to be a costly confusion. Franklin himself confessed that he found it hard to be

[1] The Hôtel de Valentinois stood at the corner of the rue Basse and the rue des Vignes and took its name, which it always retained, from the Countess of Valentinois, to whom it once belonged. The luxury of the *fêtes* held in the gardens in her day was celebrated. The whole has been swept away by modern changes. The rue Basse is now the rue Raynouard, and its continuation the rue de Franklin.—Guillet: *Passy et ses environs.*

More than three quarters of a century later John Bigelow visited Passy to look up the remains of the first American Legation. "A part of the building or dependence of the De Chaumont estate," he wrote, "which he [Franklin] occupied was at this time still standing in the street, then known as No. 4 rue Basse. It was occupied by some Sisters of Charity, who conducted an institution for poor children. I visited the crêche, the infirmary and the school-room," which he found in rather a dirty condition. Some years later (*circa* 1865) Bigelow again visited the spot, some friends wishing to purchase it and construct a suitable home for the United States Legation in Paris, an interesting project, but one not persisted in.—Vide *Century Magazine*, March 1888.

"orderly." As an illustration of this an English friend, Alexander, after a visit to Paris, wrote to him:

"Forgive me, dear Doctor, for noticing that your papers seem to lye a little loosely about your house. You ought to consider yourself as surrounded by spies and amidst people who can make a cable from a thread. Would not a spare half-hour per day enable your grandson to arrange all your papers, useless or not, so that you could come at them sooner, and not one be visible to a prying eye?"

But this was perhaps asking too much of the already harassed young William. One aspect of Franklin's office life and duty we have already glanced at—the reception of visitors. The correspondence was formidable, in sheer bulk. Owing to the constant risk of capture of the vessels which bore despatches, four copies of every paper to Congress had to be made. The idea of carbon paper or a copying-press had not occurred to Franklin's inventive mind. The originals were always endorsed on the outside: "To be sunk if in danger of falling into the hands of the enemy." And many scores were so sunk.

Under such circumstances, therefore, it can be understood, that any exact and punctual epistolary connection between Paris and Philadelphia was well-nigh impossible and that there were long periods of anxiety when no answer came to the most urgent despatches, and Franklin was obliged to act wholly on his own responsibility.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1777, the neutrality of France appeared highly precarious. One could only wonder when the inevitable breach between the Courts of Versailles and St. James would come. We find Lord Stormont reporting to London:

"Franklin affects to lie *perdu*, but that infamous incendiary Deane is very frequent in his visits to Versailles. I am assured that he was there no less than four times last week. He generally goes at seven in the morning and stays till about nine."[1]

[1] Foreign Office Correspondence.—The American business at Versailles was chiefly transacted with one of the head clerks, Gerard, who spoke English well, was a great friend of the Americans, and took a prominent part in their subsequent relations with France. He was appointed the first Minister to America after the recognition of independence, leaving Paris on the first of April 1778.

A frequent subject of the British Ambassador's complaint was the young Frenchmen who were begging for American commissions. Franklin was granting countless interviews to these young fire-eaters.

In May Stormont wrote:

"I learnt to-day, from pretty good authority, that Franklin and Deane have engaged sixteen more French officers; one of them is an exempt in the Cent Suisses. My informer would not tell me his name, and he could not tell me when these officers are to sail, nor in what port of France they are to embark."

Franklin's usual plan was to furnish those officers with letters of introduction to the American Commander-in-Chief. But, for his part, General Washington never had any great liking for these adventurers, stigmatizing them as "men who in the first instance tell you that they wish for nothing more than the honour of serving in so glorious a cause, as volunteers; the next day solicit rank without pay, the day following want money advanced to them, and in the course of a week want further promotion, and are not satisfied with anything you can do for them." He ended by declaring: "I do most devoutly wish that we had not a single foreigner among us, except the Marquis de Lafayette, who acts upon very different principles from those which govern the rest."

Franklin's two colleagues, Deane and Lee, were meanwhile travelling about Europe. On Lee's return from Spain he was sent by his colleagues to Berlin. While at that court his papers were stolen. Usually, when Lee happened to be in Paris, there was trouble, and he persisted in a reckless course of quarrelling with his fellow-commissioners and general mischief-making which ended eventually in his recall.

But before this event happened tidings of the American victory at Saratoga (October 1777) and the surrender of Burgoyne reached Paris. They were brought to France by the young American, Jonathan Austin, who travelled post-haste to Passy with the despatches from Congress.

The scene, as long afterwards described by Austin, was dramatic. His carriage dashed into the courtyard of the

Hôtel de Valentinois. Franklin and his colleagues, hearing his arrival, came down to meet him. "Sir, is Philadelphia taken?" cried Franklin to the messenger. "It is, sir," was the reply; the Doctor turned away to hide his emotion. "But, sir," went on Austin, I have greater news than that. General Burgoyne and his whole army are prisoners of war!"

This was enough for the Court of Versailles. The news of Saratoga was greeted in France with almost the same public exultation which would have followed a French victory. On the 12th a council of the ministers was held, and five days later Franklin was informed that the King was resolved to acknowledge American independence and make a treaty.

In a letter to Horace Walpole (March 22, 1778) Madame du Deffand says:

"Mr. Franklin has been presented to the King. He was accompanied by some twenty Insurgents, three or four of whom wore a uniform. Franklin wore a dress of reddish-brown velvet, white hose, his hair hanging loose, his spectacles on his nose, and a white hat under his arm. I do not know what he said, but the reply of the King was very gracious, as well towards the United States as toward Franklin, their deputy. He praised his conduct and of all his compatriots. I do not know what title he will have, but he will go to Court every Tuesday, like all the rest of the diplomatic corps."

The first Franco-American treaty of May 1778 was a treaty of Amity and Commerce. No reference was made to Great Britain nor to an alliance against her. It mentioned the United States as an independent nation, and agreed that there should be peace and friendship between the contracting parties. It conceded to America the same rights in France as the most favoured nation in the matter of imposts and duties; it enunciated the doctrine that free ships made free goods, suspended the *droit d'aubaine* in France as far as Americans were concerned, defined contraband, and made arrangements regarding consuls. On the same day that it was signed a second treaty, for offensive and defensive alliance, was concluded.

This latter treaty was tantamount to war with England, and Lord Stormont promptly demanded his passports, packed up and quitted Paris. Other departures were not

long delayed. Deane and Lee were recalled by Congress and Dr. Franklin received his credentials as sole Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America and duly presented them to the King at Court. It perhaps deserves to be mentioned as an instance of the corrupting influence of Courts even upon such a character as Franklin's that the new Minister appeared on that occasion in a blue court dress fully embroidered with gold, with his scanty locks concealed by a wig.[1]

Thereafter life at the American Legation became for Franklin rather more settled and tranquil, despite the vast amount of business which had to be transacted and the increased number of persons whom the Minister was obliged to see daily.

He was, as an American Ambassador of our own time, without much exaggeration, has said, "in his own person the American Government in Europe and obliged to act not merely as an Ambassador but as a War Department, a Treasury Department, a Navy Department, a Prize Court, a Bureau for the Relief and Exchange of Prisoners, a Consul and dealer in cargoes which came from America."[2]

There were sometimes public events in which he had to take part—the most notable of which was the return in 1778 to France and to Paris of his illustrious fellow-philosopher, Voltaire, who had long been in exile.

Franklin could hardly fail to wish to meet a man whose glory had for so long a time filled both worlds, nor was Voltaire less desirous of meeting Franklin. A mutual presentation followed. Although he had lost the habit of speaking English, the author of *Candide* began the conversation in that tongue, but soon resuming his own, said, "I could not resist the desire of speaking for a moment in Mr. Franklin's language." The American philosopher presented his grandson and asked his benediction, which he gave thus: "*God and Liberty*—the only benediction fit for a grandson of Franklin." The first part of this benediction became subsequently repudiated by those of Voltaire's followers who were not Deists.

[1] A portrait of the Doctor depicting him in this attire is in the possession of the Biddle family of Philadelphia.

[2] J. H. Choate: *Addresses.*

At the crowded public ceremony which followed Voltaire and Franklin were given an ovation.

" There presently arose a general cry that M. Voltaire and Mr. Franklin should be introduced to each other. This was done, and they bowed and spoke to each other. This was no satisfaction; there must be something more. Neither of our philosophers seemed to divine what was wished or expected; they, however, took each other by the hand. But this was not enough; the clamour continued, until the explanation came out, ' Il faut s'embrasser à la française.' The two aged actors upon this great theatre of philosophy and frivolity then embraced each other's cheeks; and then the tumult subsided, and the cry immediately spread through the whole kingdom, and all over Europe, ' *Qu'il était charmant de voir s'embrasser Solon et Sophocle!* ' " [1]

After the British surrender at Yorktown in 1781 Dr. Franklin became the representative of a successful nation and the most distinguished among the commissioners who were appointed to discuss the terms of peace.

Yet even when peace was in sight the American need for money was as great—perhaps greater than ever. Danger had been removed on land; it was otherwise at sea, and merchandise continued exposed to capture and a state of war went on. Lafayette returned to Paris in the winter of 1781–82, and voluntarily attached himself to Franklin as his aide-de-camp, making it his business to keep in touch with Court opinion for the American Minister's benefit. In one of his letters he writes:

" I have had several conversations respecting the situation of American affairs. I am in a few days to be called into a committee of the three Ministers, which I have requested, because I think it better to debate with them all than to divide my opinion into separate conferences. In every answer to their questions I will endeavour to fulfil the views of your Excellency. And in case you are not dissatisfied with your aide-de-camp, I am perfectly happy."

Meanwhile, as has been said, Minister Franklin's negotiations for cash went on. The Continental Congress was badly

[1] E. E. Hale: *Franklin in France.*

organized and its fondness for financial makeshifts put a sometimes intolerable burden on both Franklin in Paris and Adams at the Hague. For instance, bills were issued in America of which no previous notice had been given and they had to be met somehow ; while, in addition, demands for the payment of military supplies were constantly arriving at the Legation. Again and again Franklin had literally to go hat in hand to Versailles begging for fresh loans from the Minister.

Previously, he had written (February 22, 1781) to John Adams a note about the drafts made on them, whose humour cloaks real anxiety.

" I have lately made a fresh and strong application for more money. I have not yet received a positive answer. I have, however, two of the Christian Graces, Faith and Hope ; but my faith is only that of which the Apostle speaks, the evidence of things not seen. For in truth I do not see, at present, how many bills drawn at random on our ministers in France, Spain and Holland are to be paid ; nor that anything but omnipotent necessity can excuse the imprudence of it. Yet as I think the bills drawn upon us by the Congress ought at all risques to be accepted, I shall accordingly use my best endeavours to procure money for their honourable discharge, against when they become due, if you should not in the meantime be provided ; and if these endeavours fail, I shall be ready to break, run away, or go to Prison with you, as it shall please God."

By the close of that year ten millions lent in Holland on the endorsement of the French Government were almost wholly exhausted and a second loan was arranged in the following summer. At the beginning of 1782 the arrival of Barclay, the newly appointed Consul-General in Paris, eased Franklin of much routine official labour.

On January 19, 1782, he writes to Jay, American Minister at Madrid, about the cost of keeping up their legations, of which Congress had complained.

" I wish not to be burthensome to our country and having myself no expensive habits, having besides no wife, or family to bring up and living out of Paris, perhaps I should be as

little incommoded by a reduction of some of these charges as any of my brethren ; but as we are to establish precedents, I would not have them as may be oppressive to another, or to a successor differently circumstanced."

He was, therefore, opposed to an undignified niggardliness.

With Robert Morris, the American Secretary of the Treasury, he was in constant correspondence about the loans from France. At the end of one letter he observes, characteristically :

" I will add one short reflection, that wrong estimates are often made of a friend's abilities ; and borrowers are apt to say, ' Help me with such a sum, 'tis to a man of your wealth a trifle.' They are ignorant that the demands constantly made upon him by the course of the expense he is necessarily engaged in may be equal, and perhaps exceed, his incomes. And it is grinding to be pressed for loans in a manner that obliges a man either to seem unkind by refusing or to disclose his own inabilities. Let us be assured that if we do not obtain another loan, it is not for want of good will to us."

On the 9th of March Franklin wrote to Morris :

" You will see by the English papers which I send to Mr. Secretary Livingstone, that the sense of the nation is now fully against the continuance of the American War. The petitions of the cities goes on. Lord North mustered all his force, yet had a majority against him of nineteen."

Upon the resignation of Lord North, the new Minister, Lord Shelburne, furnished an emissary, Richard Oswald, with full instructions as to the negotiations he wished him to open in Paris.

He was enjoined to tell Franklin that he " should not be deceived by the cry of the country for peace and in favour of America." England at large, it was explained, was in no way reconciled to Independence. Many important people were " quiet for the present." Oswald was " to tell Dr. Franklin that if this negotiation goes off, the War will be pushed with the utmost vigour." The emissary did as he was bid, but the threat was without much effect upon the American Minister, and so in May, Thomas Grenville,

similarily appointed by the Shelburne Ministry, followed with instructions to confer with Vergennes as well as with Franklin. Grenville reported :

" He [Vergennes] said he could not allow the Independence of America to be the only cause of war, for that France had *found* and not *made* America independent. . . . He wished for a treaty of peace more just and desirable than the last, and that the principal objects they should attend to were justice and dignity."

It soon became clear that both Shelburne and Fox hoped somehow to detach America from France in the preliminary negotiations, to grant independence outright and afterwards conclude a peace with the United States. This accomplished, England would stand a better chance of extorting better terms from France and Spain or even of continuing the war.

Congress had already instructed John Adams, then Minister at the Hague, and Jay, Minister to Spain, to act as joint commissioners with Franklin. Another appointed commissioner, Henry Laurens, was unluckily still a prisoner of war in England. The British commissioner was Oswald.

Of the long and complicated discussions between the three sets of negotiators in Paris it is only necessary to say that they lasted for many weary months. For a time Adams was intensely suspicious of Shelburne's good faith, a frame of mind partly shared by Vergennes and Jay, but never by Franklin.[1]

Jay's distrust soon became transferred to the French Government. He believed that the Ministers were secretly co-operating with Spain. And, judging by a passage in Adams's Diary, Jay seems to have been unsympathetic on other grounds.

" Mr. Jay likes Frenchmen as little as Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard did. He says they are not a moral people ; they know

[1] Adams, as his Diary shows, began his mission in a highly suspicious temper. On October 27, when he had only been one day in Paris, he writes : " Between two as subtle spirits as any in this world,—the one malicious, the other I think honest,—I shall have a delicate, a nice, critical part to act. Franklin's coming will be to divide us ; to this end he will provoke, he will insinuate, he will intrigue, he will manœuvre. My curiosity will at least be employed in observing his invention and his artifice."

not what it is ; he don't like any Frenchmen ; the Marquis de Lafayette is clever, but he is a Frenchman. Our Allies don't play fair, he told me." [1]

Accordingly, believing that his country must depend upon itself alone, and that, in the illness and pro-French weakness of Franklin, the responsibility rested on him, on September 11, without consulting Franklin, he sent Vaughan, one of the English agents in Paris, with a secret message to the English Government. Vaughan was absent a fortnight ; in that period he had completely succeeded in his mission. Thereafter, the French and Americans no longer worked in perfect harmony ; the British and the Americans did. The British Ministry showed an increasing disposition to concede the American demands, the temptation to press forward a peace became too strong to be resisted. During the summer and early autumn Franklin had suffered much from illness and could with difficulty attend to business. But the commissioners met daily at the Legation in Passy, frequently dining together "in order to pursue our business in the evening." At last, on November 29, Franklin communicated to Vergennes the startling fact that the commissioners of both England and America had signed the preliminary articles of peace. To this the offended Vergennes made reply :

"I am at a loss, sir, to explain your conduct and that of your colleagues on this occasion. You have concluded your preliminary articles without any communication between us, although the instructions from Congress prescribe that nothing shall be done without the participation of the King. . . . You are wise and discreet, sir ; you perfectly understand what is due to propriety ; you have all your life performed your duties. I pray you to consider how you propose to fulfil those which are due to the King."

As a matter of fact, although the commissioners had departed from their instructions, the French Minister had been perfectly aware of their exclusive proceedings and had never once offered any objection. They were weary of delay and wished to make an end of the business, in which France showed so little alacrity.

[1] Adams : Diary, November 1782.

A recent writer on American diplomacy [1] considers Franklin's reply (December 17) to be "a masterpiece of diplomatic art, even to the adoption of a certain touch of pathos and its slightly rambling quality, natural to his age, but not characteristic of his writing even later." The action of the commissioners, Franklin explained, was "not from want of respect for the King, whom we all love and honour," but due to rashness and inexperience. "So they hope it will be excused, and that the great work, which has hitherto been so happily conducted, is so nearly brought to perfection, and is so glorious to his reign, will not be ruined by a single indiscretion of ours. And certainly the whole edifice sinks to the ground immediately if you refuse on that account to give us any further assistance." There is a pause, and then Franklin ingeniously adds: "The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us. I hope this little understanding will therefore be kept a secret, and that they will find themselves totally mistaken."

Franklin, indeed, knew his man. Vergennes was aware that if he now obstructed the treaty his whole work would, as Franklin said, "sink to the ground"—England and America, again united, would turn against France. He accordingly acquiesced in the treaty and wrote to his envoy, Luzerne, in Philadelphia not to complain to Congress of the highly irregular action of the American commissioners. Vergennes did more: to show his complete good-will, he arranged a new loan of six million francs to the United States.

"The preliminary Treaty," observes Professor Mowat, "was a good act; neither side had been beaten in the war; there was enough fight left in both sides for the negotiators to have wrangled with each other for years." [2] John Adams never pretended that the Americans had won the war. There is a significant passage in his Journal, under date November 2, 1782:

"The present conduct of England and America resembles that of the eagle and the cat. An eagle, over a farmer's yard, espied a creature that he thought a hare. He pounced upon

[1] C. R. Fish: *American Diplomacy.*

[2] Mowat: *The Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States.*

and took him up in the air; the cat seized him by the neck with her teeth, and round the body with her fore and hind claws. The eagle, finding himself scratched and pressed, bids the cat let go and fall down. 'No,' says the cat, 'I will not let go and fall; you shall stoop and set me down.'" [1]

A few days after the preliminaries had been signed a separate treaty between France and England was ready for signature. Vergennes made it a point that the American commissioners should be present at the signing, as a reminder of what they should have done when their own measure was similarly completed. Franklin and Adams duly attended the ceremony, the other two being absent from Paris.

[1] England, of course, is the eagle of this allegory. Not yet was the Roman emblem the symbol of the American Republic.

CHAPTER II

JEFFERSON (1785–89)

In the year following the peace, while the venerable American Minister was pursuing a calmer life at Passy, surrounded by his admiring friends and indulging in that pleasant correspondence with the fair sex which remains such striking evidence of the wit and gallantry to which an octogenarian can occasionally pretend, a new and notable figure appeared in Paris.[1]

Repeatedly had Thomas Jefferson been asked to undertake some diplomatic mission to Europe, but repeatedly he had declined. Franklin had made the young Virginian's acquaintance in Philadelphia in 1775, when they were both delegates to Congress and he, together with Adams, R. H. Lee and Jefferson, had been appointed a committee to consider and report on Lord North's conciliatory overtures of that year. Later, as a member of another committee charged with drafting the Declaration of Independence, it was Jefferson who actually indited that celebrated piece of rhetoric. He was to have accompanied Franklin as fellow-commissioner to Paris, instead of Arthur Lee, but declined, and he likewise refused the peace mission of 1782. As Dr. Franklin wrote him (July 15, 1782):

"I was in great hopes when I saw your name in the commission for treating of Peace that I should have the happiness of seeing you here, and of enjoying again in this world your pleasing society and conversation. But I begin now to fear that I shall be disappointed, as I was in my expectation of your company when I first undertook the voyage hither."

[1] In a room of the Legation was a small printing-press, by which Franklin produced numerous copies of letters, broadsides, squibs, and *jeux d'esprit*, upon which he bestowed much care in correction and circulated amongst his friends. Some of these productions gave pain to John Adams's wife, Abigail, who was no admirer of Rabelais.

Two years passed, and Jefferson showed himself more inclined to yield to the persuasion of his friends. It was understood that Franklin wished to return home, although no date had yet been fixed for that event. Meanwhile, Lafayette had been urging upon Congress the great advantage of negotiating commercial treaties with the States of Europe, and particularly with France. He himself had sent a memorial on the subject of American trade to Vergennes, and brought all his influence to bear on the different departments of the French administration. But France's revenues were in the hands of the farmers-general, who were buttressed in their opposition to any scheme of reciprocal tariffs by all the aristocracy or bourgeoisie who had any interest in preserving the old system. Franklin, prompted by Lafayette, had done his best, some advantages had accrued; but it was unwise to put any additional labour upon the aged Minister's shoulders, and on May 7, 1784, Jefferson was appointed a coadjutor with Franklin and Adams to negotiate treaties of commerce with the European Powers. It was commonly believed that he would succeed Franklin as Minister in Paris, while Adams would be sent to London.

Three months later Jefferson arrived in Paris. He was warmly greeted by Franklin, who introduced him to many of his friends. On August 30 they were joined by Adams from the Hague and the trio immediately began in Passy those conferences which found expression in the subsequent voluminous *Diplomatic Correspondence* for that period.

The commissioners, it may be noted, were authorized by Congress to treat with the Empress of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, the Kings of Prussia, Denmark, England, Spain, Naples and Sardinia, with the sovereigns of Portugal, with the Elector of Saxony, with the Pope, with the city of Hamburg, with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Sublime Porte, the Republics of Venice and Genoa, the Emperor of Morocco, the Dey of Algiers, the city and kingdom of Tripoli and the State and Kingdom of Tunis. Truly, a formidable list! They began by notifying the representatives of these powers in Paris that they were ready to begin negotiations whenever any minister was appointed for the purpose. All

of the representatives thus notified returned courteous replies to the American commissioners.

As to Dr. Franklin, although he generally attended and lent his counsel, he was weary of public business and grew fonder of his physical experiments, letter-writing and social diversions amongst his Paris friends. For the ensuing nine months he assisted in the deliberations, duly affixed his signature to the letters and watched with tepid interest the progress of the negotiations. It appeared that the more important Powers were in no hurry to act. The "Model Treaty" which Congress proposed was a little too advanced for them. In forwarding it, Jefferson wrote to the Danish Ambassador:

"This is the draft in such a form as we would wish to see established. To emancipate commerce from the shackles which oppress it, to increase the happiness, and lessen the miseries of mankind, are the objects we propose, and we flatter ourselves that the means proposed are founded in the most perfect equality of right."

Such altruism was noble, enlightened and enterprising; but a doubt soon crept into the minds of several of the foreign envoys that the Americans were hardly yet sufficiently organized as an administrative unit to execute their diplomatic programme effectively. It was a doubt voiced by the Duke of Dorset, the British Ambassador, who courteously, but pointedly, wrote to enquire whether the commissioners were "merely commissioned by Congress or whether you have received separate powers from the respective States." It appeared that a deputation of Franco-American merchants had lately waited upon the British Foreign Secretary

"to express how anxiously they wished to be informed upon this subject, repeated experience having taught them in particular as well as the public in general how little the authority of Congress could avail in any respect where the interest of any one individual State was even concerned, and particularly where the concerns of the particular States might be supposed to militate against such resolutions as Congress might think proper to adopt." [1]

[1] That Franklin was constantly aware of and ready to avow the anomaly is suggested by a letter he addressed this summer (1785) to a sculptor commissioned to execute certain busts of Lafayette, Jefferson and himself. "You

This was just the vulnerable point in the American armour; and for nearly two months no answer could be returned until letters had been sent to Congress emphasizing the anomaly of the situation and pressing for measures which would satisfy the chancelleries of Europe.

In Britain's case a direct answer was evaded by Congress in the appointment of John Adams, as the first American Minister Plenipotentionary to the Court of St. James. Long before Adams took up his post in London, May 1785, Franklin had announced his desire to be recalled from Paris. Through the winter of 1784–5 his habits became more those of an invalid. His infirmities prevented him from attendance at Court, and from going abroad for social purposes, as often he had formerly done.

In a long letter addressed to Jay in January 1785 he hoped the latter would be Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Jay had, in fact, accepted that post before this letter arrived.

"As far as I can perceive," Franklin wrote, "the good disposition of this Court towards us continues. I wish I could say as much for the rest of the European Courts. I think that their desire of being connected with us by treaties is of late much abated; and this, I suppose, is occasioned by the pains Britain takes to represent us everywhere as distracted with divisions, discontented with our governments, the people unwilling to pay taxes, the Congress unable to collect them, and many desiring the restoration of the old governments. The English papers are full of this stuff, and their ministers get it copied into the foreign papers. . . .

"I should be less unhappy," he says in conclusion, "if I could imagine the delay of my *congé* useful to the States, or in the least degree necessary. But they have many equally capable of doing all I have to do here."

Franklin received his recall on May 2. He at once addressed a note to Vergennes acquainting him with that fact.

have not," he writes, "taken into consideration that the 13 United States of America are so many distinct governments which have, each one of them, the right to employ such an artist as they consider fit and are by no means obliged to employ one who has been employed before either by Congress or by particular States. The State of Virginia, then, has done you no injustice in taking another artist, although she has not perhaps made a better choice."

"My malady makes it impracticable for me to pay my *devoirs* at Versailles personally"; and, therefore, he charges Vergennes with his expressions of gratitude to the King. . . . "My sincere prayers are that God may shower down His blessings on the King, Queen, their children, and all the royal family, to the latest generations."

Alas for human destiny! How strangely that prayer was to be answered ere a single decade had passed!

Franklin's last official act was the conclusion with his fellow-commissioners of a treaty of friendship and commerce between the United States and Prussia. It was signed on July 9, three days only before Franklin left Passy.

"Having stayed in France about 8½ years, I took leave of the Court and my friends and set out on my return home, July 12, 1785, leaving Passy with my two grandsons, at 4 p.m.; arrived about eight at St. Germain. M. de Chaumont, with his daughter Sophia, accompanied us to Nanterre. M. Le Veillard will continue with us to Havre. We met the Miss Alexanders with Mrs. Williams, our cousins who had provided a lodging for me at M. Benoit's. I found that the motion of the litter lent me by the Duke de Coigny did not incommode me. It was one of the Queen's, carried by two large mules, the muleteer riding another. M. le V. and my children in a carriage. We drank tea at M. Benoit's, and went early to bed."

The spectacle of the venerable but humbly born first envoy from the American Republic reclining in the royal litter with its caparisoned mules and outrider, followed by the coaches containing his friends and his two grandsons, making his progress through the towns and villages of France, must have been impressive, and to a seer would have been ominous. When he stopped at night he found the most distinguished persons of the countryside ready to welcome him as if he had been royalty itself. At Vernon it was the Viscount de Tilly and his lady; at Mantes they lodged at the palace of the Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld. The Academy of Rouen sent a deputation of greeting. "We had," he writes, "a great company at dinner and at six went in a chair to the President's, where were assembled some gentlemen of the robe." He adds—and the homely observa-

tion has a living interest—" We drank tea there, awkwardly made, for want of practice, very little being made in France." From that time to the present there has never been any danger of the cheering herb provoking any ferment, political or other, in that quarter of the globe.[1]

At Havre the late American Minister was visited by the Governor, the Intendant and the chief citizens, and on July 22, 1785, the packet on which he had embarked sailed away.

" The succession to Dr. Franklin at the Court of France," Jefferson wrote long afterwards, " was an excellent school of humility. On being presented to anyone, as the Minister of America,[2] the commonplace question used in such cases was, ' C'est vous, Monsieur, qui remplace le Docteur Franklin ? ' (' It is you, sir, who replace Dr. Franklin ? '). I generally answered them, ' No one can replace him, sir; I am only his successor.' "

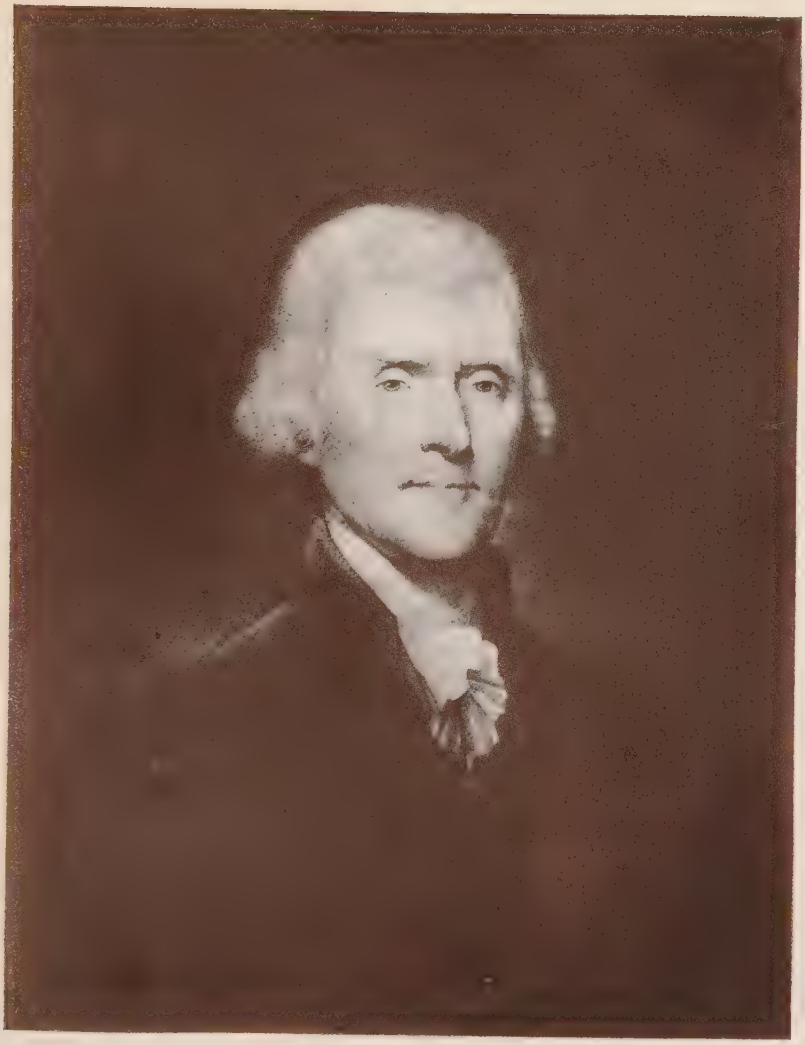
At this time the new Minister was barely forty-two, a tall, gaunt, red-haired man, pointed out in all companies as the author of the Declaration of Independence. In intellect, it must be admitted, he was the complete doctrinaire, with a ready asperity towards all those who were not of his way of thinking. The death of his young and idolized wife and her parting injunction that he should remain a widower gave a certain twist to his character and to his habits, which became very noticeable when, twenty years later, he came to occupy the White House.

But if Jefferson was inveterate in his tastes, doctrines and prejudices, he was also loyal in his likings, and not even Franklin himself had a greater partiality for France and especially for the new political ideas rapidly gaining currency to which he not unreasonably considered he and his compatriots had largely contributed.

If the active and obliging Ray de Chaumont had hoped on Dr. Franklin's departure that the new American Minister would continue his Legation at the Hôtel de Valentinois in

[1] No French historian attempts to explain the Boston tea riots to his countrymen : the implied passion for tea seems to a Frenchman something more than frivolous—it is incomprehensible.

[2] See Note on the title " America " at end of chapter.



THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Passy, he was soon undeceived. Jefferson considered the neighbourhood rather too remote and it does not appear, either, that he was (save in one or two instances) particularly drawn to Franklin's old friends or they to him. Accordingly, we find him settling down in new quarters elsewhere.

"I have at length," he writes to Mrs. Adams in London, "procured a house in a situation much more pleasing to me than my present; it is at the Grille des Champs-Élysées, but within the city. It suits me in every circumstance but the price—being dearer than the one I am now in. It has a clever garden to it."

It was characteristic of Jefferson, by no means given to indiscriminate praise of his fellow-beings, to detect cleverness in a garden. In a later missive he observes about the rent of this house:

". . . In stating my accounts with the United States I am at a loss whether to charge house-rent or not. It has always been allowed to Dr. Franklin. Does not Mr. Adams mean to charge this for Auteuil and London? Because, if he does, I certainly will, being convinced by experience that my expenses here will otherwise exceed my allowance."

It was an experience which every American envoy down to our day was to acquire and one which occasionally abridged their diplomatic sojourn both in the French and in other capitals.

Jefferson had only established his Legation a few weeks when he wrote rallying Mrs. Adams on her English predilections:

"I consider your boasts of the splendour of your city and of its superior hackney coaches as a flout, and declare that I would not give the polite, self-denying, feeling, hospitable, good-humoured people of this country and their amiability in every point of view (though it must be confessed our streets *are* somewhat dirty and our *fiacres* rather indifferent) for ten such races of rich, proud, hectoring, swearing, quibbling, carnivorous animals as those among whom you are; and that I do love this people with all my heart and think that with

a better religion, a better form of government and their present governors, their condition and country would be most enviable."

This was a large and important abatement of perfection ; but Jefferson was ready to overlook—as will be seen—many more vital shortcomings. Even Franklin had not been blind to the most glaring defect in the political character of the French people—for he had written (November 23, 1784) to his official successor :

"These people are so accustomed to see everything done by solicitation and interest or what they call protection, and nothing without it, that they hardly conceive it possible to obtain even the payment of a just debt but by means of persons whom they suppose to have influence enough to support and enforce their pretensions. . . . They run about to everybody with their memorials, before they have even presented their account. . . . Thus, the creditors not only of a State in America, but even of private merchants, tease the merchants of this country, as well as those of America here, with their petitions and cases requesting assistance and interest, when it does not appear that their claims have been refused or even made."

In truth, as Carlyle long afterwards insisted, the elements of distrust and falsehood were so ingrained in every relation of French society and administration, French literature, religion and commerce as to be fundamental to the whole existing system. Add to this that the national finances were as bad as could be and a national catastrophe was as inevitable as the cataract of Niagara when the waters approach the precipice. Yet Jefferson could still regard most things about him benevolently, even the monarchy and the autocratic powers of the Ministry. The latter had just seized upon an audacious poetaster who had composed a set of verses reflecting on certain ladies of the Court. Jefferson's opinion was that the ministerial action showed "the value of energy in government. Our feeble Republic would in such a case have probably been wrapt in the flames of war and desolation for want of power lodged in a single hand to punish summarily those who write songs."

Of the early balloonists who were just then heroically attempting to cross the Channel Jefferson observed:

"The fate of your Pilâtre de Rozier will have reached you before this does, and with more certainty than we yet know of. This will damp for a while the ardour of the Phaetons of our race who are endeavouring to learn us the way to heaven on wings of our own."

Aware of the value of his predecessor's social activities, he set about cultivating the acquaintance of the influential Madame Houdetot.

"I took a trip yesterday to Saunois and commenced an acquaintance with the old Countess d'Houdetot. I received much pleasure from it, and hope it has opened a door of admission for me to the circle of literati with which she is environed."

Jefferson was ever the patriot. In one of his letters he has just "heard the nightingale in all its perfection; and I do not hesitate to pronounce that in America it would be deemed a bird of the third rank only, our mocking-bird and fox-coloured thrush being unquestionably superior to it."

This outburst of ornithological patriotism anticipated by only a few years the numerous panegyrics by his countrymen upon another bird of miraculous beauty and power—soon to figure as the national emblem—the American eagle.

In Paris just then there were plenty of indications of the precarious footing upon which the Court and certain of the aristocracy stood to the body of the nation. On August 15, 1785, less than a month after Franklin's departure, the culmination of the celebrated intrigue known as the affair of the Queen's Necklace burst upon the town.

"You will be astonished to hear," wrote M. Le Veillard of Passy to Franklin, "that we have just arrested in his full dress, and sent to the Bastille, a cardinal, who is a prince and bishop of Strasburg. This cardinal, who has an income of more than twelve hundred thousand livres, took from a jeweller's on credit, and on the Queen's account, a diamond necklace, worth one million six hundred thousand livres. Accused by her before the King, he has produced a note, which, as he pretends, he believed to have been written and

signed by her. His trial is going on before the Parliament of Paris, and his sentence will be pronounced after the vacation. He is in the uncomfortable dilemma of being able to prove that he is not a knave, only by proving that he is a fool."

With reference to the necklace, Jefferson observed in a letter (September 4, 1785) to Mrs. Adams:

"You will have seen the affair of the Cardinal de Rohan so well detailed in the Leyden *Gazette* that I need say nothing on that head. The Cardinal is still in the Bastille. It is certain that the Queen has been compromitted without the smallest authority from her, and the probability is that the Cardinal has been duped into it by his mistress, Madame la Motte. There results from this two consequences not to his honour: that he is a debauchee and a booby."

Cardinal de Rohan was liberated by an order of the Parliament in June 1786. Such was the unpopularity of the Court that even this booby and debauchee was cheered by an immense crowd of people who were waiting around the Bastille, not on account of his merits, but to express their contempt for the Queen and her generally imprudent behaviour.[1]

One of the first official matters which claimed Jefferson's attention was the case of the Barbary corsairs and their piracies towards American vessels.[2]

It was a most desperate and troublesome business destined to be a thorn in the side of America for many years until at last the nest of Barbary pirates was broken up by the

[1] Jefferson long afterwards wrote:

"I have ever believed that, had there been no Queen, there would have been no revolution. No force would have been provoked nor exercised. The King would have gone hand in hand with the wisdom of his sounder counsellors, who, guided by the increased lights of the age, wished only, with the same pace, to advance the principles of their social constitution."

[2] In his Journal Franklin alludes to this matter of the Barbary pirates at some length. He says that all the Powers of Europe bought their peace of the corsairs at that time, excepting Spain and the Italian States, "with whom they have constant war."

Two plans were prepared by M. Caille—one of the consuls with whom Franklin talked about this—for their suppression. All Europe should agree to cut off all trade with the Barbary States and compel them to keep the peace by influencing the Sublime Porte, to whom Monsieur Caille was sure the deys and other Barbary monarchs would defer.

American Navy. For it was then the practice amongst the European Powers to pay tribute to the petty sovereigns of Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis, rather than make an active effort towards the extirpation of the pirates. The Algerians had not been slow to discover that they need expect no interference from England if they boarded and robbed any vessel flying the American flag, and a report came this very summer to Jefferson that a Virginia vessel had been seized by a Moorish corsair. The United States could, of course, have offered to pay tribute ;—but this was totally opposed to their national dignity, and besides, they had no joint fund just then for such a purpose. Nevertheless, the American Minister in Paris had gone carefully into the matter, ascertaining to what extent other nations were content to pay blackmail. As to France, he was informed that nothing used in war was ever given, but chiefly mirrors and various ornamental articles. The Dutch Government, however, furnished a list which contained many naval stores and articles which must have been of value in fitting out fleets. Sugar figured largely in the list. A barrel containing 280 loaves of sugar, amounting to 8,072 pounds, is mentioned among the extraordinary presents made to the Emperor of Morocco by the States-General in 1774. Other extraordinary presents are three clocks, and—"one very large watch." So it was with the other tributaries. All paid baksheesh to the pirates.

General Lafayette, in consultation with his friend Jefferson, formed a plan of attacking the Barbary States, and compelling them to abandon their piracies. The Swedish and Sardinian Ministers were also consulted on the subject. While the plan was maturing, Vergennes invited Lafayette to dine with him one day. After dinner the Minister told his guest that he was commanded to instruct him to desist from it ; that neither England nor France would permit such an enterprise, "as both these Governments profited by the piratical system of the Barbary States, and would not allow it to be suppressed." [1] That put a stop to the plan. Sixteen years later, under Jefferson's own administration as President, the United States Navy led the way in breaking

[1] Sparks : *Conversations with Lafayette.*

up this nest of pirates. By countenancing this measure, Jefferson is usually thought entirely to have reversed his previous policy, which was to neglect and suppress the infant American Navy. But it deserves to be pointed out that in the early days of his Ministry at Paris Jefferson wrote (August 8, 1785) to Adams, recommending that the redoubtable John Paul Jones should be sent out to reconnoitre.

"If we look forward to the very probable event of war with those pirates, an important object would be obtained by Captain Jones's becoming acquainted with their ports, force, tactics, etc."

Jefferson had previously written to Paul Jones about these pirates, and in the same letter he had also exhibited a watchful eye upon the proceedings of the French Navy on the western shores of the North American continent, which he long afterwards sent Lewis and Clark to explore. He had a suspicion that the French might be contemplating a colony on that far Pacific coast, the moment he heard that the celebrated navigator, La Peyrouse, was fitting out ships at a French port.

"Will you be so good [he wrote] as to make an enquiry into all the circumstances relative to Peyrouse's expedition which seem to ascertain his destination, particularly what number of men and of what conditions and vocations has he on board? What animals, their species and number? What trees, plants or seeds? What utensils? What merchandise and other necessaries? This enquiry should be made with as little appearance of interest in it as possible. Should you not be able to get satisfactory information without going to Brest, and it be convenient for you to go there, I will have the expense this shall occasion prepaid. Commit all the circumstances to writing and bring them when you come yourself or send them by a safe hand."

But, speaking generally, there was, during his term, little for Jefferson to do in France of real importance to American prosperity. He did succeed in obtaining the admission of certain products on favourable terms, as compared with those of other nations, and some mitigation of the Government tobacco monopoly. But French administration was

then (and for a century afterwards) too unreceptive for any argument to effect a solid lodgment. The system of protection and monopolies was ingrained in the constitutional fabric.

In his correspondence Jefferson reviews this bad system very thoroughly. He urges the French Government to refuse to renew the contracts with the farmers-general for the duties on tobacco. These letters are in his best style; he demonstrates conclusively that the royal treasury would gain immensely if it would open to everybody the trade in tobacco, establishing a fixed revenue duty, and collecting that duty by its own officials. But the finance minister did not dare touch the privileges of the farmers-general. This class of men, of great wealth, and of the power that attends great wealth, seemed absolutely necessary to the crown. The old-time Mayors of the Palace did not control their *Rois Fainéants* with greater severity than these money kings did Louis XVI. We may now reflect that the additional revenue which Jefferson's plan would have brought the crown might have prevented the tragic deficits of Necker and his successors. But his arguments were all in vain.

Vainly, too, the American Minister repeatedly protested that France "could not expect America to come to her to purchase, when she did not take American commodities in return," and in the later days of his mission he opened all his fire on the system which was shutting the ports of France against food, even when Frenchmen were dying for the lack of it. He did his utmost to persuade the Ministry to permit the importation of salted provisions from the United States, but similarly without success.

"'Salt beef,' objected the Count de Montmorin, 'will give the people scurvy.' 'No,' replied Jefferson, 'we eat it in America, and we don't have the scurvy.' 'The salt tax will fall off,' said the Minister. Jefferson could not deny that it might a little; but, on the other hand, 'it would relieve the Government from the necessity of keeping the price of bread below its value.' 'But,' resumed the Count, 'the people of France will not buy salt meat.' 'Then,' replied Jefferson, 'the merchants won't import it, and no harm will be done.' 'And you cannot make a good soup

out of it,' urged the Count. 'True,' said Jefferson, 'but it gives a delightful flavour to vegetables. Besides, it will cost only half the price of fresh meat.'" [1]

It sounds like political economy being inculcated in one of Mrs. Markham's school primers.

And now comes a vital question. Dwelling for four or five years in the midst of such political conditions, tendencies and portents, what did Jefferson really make of it all? He was on terms of intimacy with Lafayette, and many of the leading notables. He read the literature of revolt and heard the talk of some of the best-informed persons in Paris society. Yet if Jefferson suspected to what length things were drifting there is very little indication of it in his private and official correspondence. He, if any man, could look at things clearly, with a fresh eye—yet, wonder of wonders, he seems to have thought that there was nothing very ominous in the wind, that events were, on the whole, taking a normal course and that the evils from which France was manifestly suffering would be cured as painlessly and effectively as Virginia or Massachusetts had been when they exchanged their written royal charters for written popular constitutions or when an elected governor had followed one appointed by a repudiated sovereign.

"In almost every point," says Everett Hale in his monograph of Franklin, "where he could express an opinion, Jefferson shows that he had no conception whatever of the magnitude of the events before him, that he had no knowledge whatever of that depth of French misery and estrangle-ment of all social order which Carlyle and the extreme French writers of to-day so vividly portray."

For example, on February 22, 1787, the Assembly of Notables first met.

On that day Jefferson writes from the American Legation to Mrs. Adams:

"Our Notables assembled to-day, and I hope before the departure of Mr. Cairnes that I shall have heard something of their proceedings worth communicating to Mr. Adams. The most remarkable effect of this commotion as yet is the

[1] Parton: *History of the United States.*

number of puns and *bons mots* it has generated. I think if they were all collected, it would make a more voluminous work than the *Encyclopedia*. This occasion, more than anything else I have seen, convinces me that this nation is incapable of any serious effort, but under the word of command. The people at large view every object only as it may furnish puns and *bons mots:* and I pronounce that a good punster would disarm the whole nation, were they ever so seriously disposed to revolt. . . . Indeed, Madam, they are gone. When a measure so capable of doing good as the calling of the Notables is treated with so much ridicule we may conclude the nation desperate, and in charity pray that heaven may give them good kings."

To Secretary Jay the Minister shows plainly that he considers the striking event happening under his eyes of no particular international importance. He forwards a brief account with the prefatory remark:

"The Assemblée des Notables being an event in the history of this country which excites notice, I have supposed it would not be disagreeable to you to learn its immediate objects, though noways connected with our interests."

Even when, over a year and a half later, in November 1788, the Notables were called together for the second time, Secretary Jay could never have divined that a great revolution was then impending. It is true in one letter Jefferson observes:

"If the States-General stop here for the present moment, all will probably end well; and they may, in future sessions, obtain a suppression of *lettres de cachet*, free press, a civil list, and other valuable modifications of their government. But it is to be feared that an impatience to rectify everything at once, which prevails in some minds, may terrify the Court, and lead them to appeal to force, and to depend on that alone."

But here his fears are that the people or the Third Estate may through their precipitancy lose the boons which the benevolent and still powerful King is half-inclined to bestow upon them.

Many years later, in the evening of his life, Jefferson composed many of his recollections of the early days of the

Revolution. But these are all coloured by after-knowledge, and the views he afterwards came to hold do not emerge from letters written at the time. What he says concerning King Louis XVI, his Queen and the Ministers, however, does give a picture of the time :

" He [Louis] had not a wish but for the good of the nation, and for that object no personal sacrifice would ever have cost him a moment's regret. But his mind was weakness itself, his constitution timid, his judgment null, and without sufficient firmness even to stand by the faith of his word. His Queen too, haughty and bearing no contradiction, had an absolute ascendancy over him ; and around her were rallied the King's brother, d'Artois, the Court generally, and the aristocratic part of his Ministers, particularly Breteuil, Broglie, Vauguyon, Foulon, Luzerne, men whose principles of government were those of the age of Louis XIV. Against this host the good counsels of Necker, Montmorin, St. Priest, altho' in unison with the wishes of the King himself, were of little avail. The resolutions of the morning, formed under their advice, would be reversed in the evening by the influence of the Queen and Court.

" But the hand of heaven weighed heavily indeed on the machinations of this junto, powerfully co-exciting the nation to force a regeneration of its government, and overwhelming with accumulated difficulties this liberticide resistance. For, while labouring under the want of money for even ordinary purposes, in a government which required a million of livres a day, and driven to the last ditch by the universal call for liberty, there came on a winter of such severe cold as was without example in the memory of man, or in the written records of history. The mercury was at times 50° below the freezing point of Fahrenheit and 22° below that of Réaumur. All outdoor labour was suspended, and the poor, without the wages of labour, were of course without either bread or fuel.

" So great indeed was the scarcity of bread that, from the highest to the lowest citizen, the bakers were permitted to deal but a scanty allowance per head, even to those who paid for it ; and in cards of invitation to dine in the richest houses, the guest was notified to bring his own bread."

This rationing of bread was, of course, to happen again, and yet again, in Paris ; but never in peace time.

"This want of bread had been foreseen for some time past, and M. de Montmorin had desired me to notify it in America, and that, in addition to the market price, a premium should be given on what should be brought from the United States. Notice was accordingly given and produced considerable supplies. Subsequent information made the importations from America, during the months of March, April and May, into the Atlantic ports of France, amount to about 21,000 barrels of flour, besides what went to other ports, and in other months, while our supplies to their West-Indian islands relieved them also from the drain. This distress for bread continued till July."

On May 4, 1789, the meeting of the States-General drew the American Minister to Versailles, but his interest is hardly greater than later envoys have shown in moderately important debates in the Chamber of Deputies.

"The objects for which this body was convened being of the first order of importance, I felt it very interesting to understand the views of the parties of which it was composed, and especially the ideas prevalent as to the organization contemplated for their government. I went, therefore, daily from Paris to Versailles, and attended their debates, generally till the hour of adjournment. Those of the Noblesse were impassioned and tempestuous. They had some able men on both sides, actuated by equal zeal. The debates of the Commons were temperate, rational and inflexibly firm. As preliminary to all other business, the *awful* questions came on: Shall the States sit in one or in distinct apartments? And shall they vote by heads or houses?"

This seems like levity, but he explains his meaning later (May 10, 1789):

"The revolution in this country has gone on hitherto with a quietness and steadiness and a progress unexampled. But there is danger of a balk now. The three orders which compose the States-General seem likely to stumble at the threshold on the great preliminary question, 'How shall they vote; by orders or persons?' If they get well over this question there will be no difficulty afterwards, there is so general a concurrence in the great points of constitutional reformation. If they do not get over this question, and this seems possible, it cannot be foreseen what issue this matter will take."

History has related that they did *not* get over this question, and the issue changed the constitution of France and of the world. But that it would provoke a cataclysm—that uprising of the people and the overturning of the monarchy —Jefferson clearly never dreamt.

" The revolution of this country [he had the previous day reported to Secretary Jay] has advanced thus far without encountering anything which deserves to be called a difficulty. There have been riots in a few instances in three or four different places, in which there may have been a dozen or twenty lives lost. The exact truth is not to be got at. A few days ago a much more serious riot took place in this city, in which it became necessary for the troops to engage in regular action with the mob, and probably about one hundred of the latter were killed. Accounts vary from twenty to two hundred. They were the most abandoned banditti of Paris, and never was a riot more unprovoked and unpitied.

" *Neither this nor any other of the riots have had a professed connection with the great national reformation going on.* They are such as have happened every year since I have been here, and as will continue to be produced by common incidents."

Thus, Jefferson recalled that one afternoon

" a body of about a hundred German cavalry were advanced and drawn up in the Place Louis XV and about 200 Swiss posted at a little distance in their rear. This drew people to the spot, who thus accidentally found themselves in front of the troops, merely at first as spectators ; but, as their numbers increased, their indignation rose. They retired a few steps, and posted themselves on and behind large piles of stones, large and small, collected in that place for a bridge which was to be built adjacent to it. In this position, happening to be in my carriage on a visit, I passed thro' the lane they had formed, without interruption. But the moment after I had passed, the people attacked the cavalry with stones."

In his letter to Jay of June 17, we not only get Jefferson's opinion of the importance of the crisis, but also his judgment of Necker :

" It is a tremendous cloud, indeed, which hovers over this nation and he at the helm has neither courage nor skill necessary to weather it. Eloquence in a high degree, knowledge

in matter of account and order, are distinguished traits in his character. Ambition is his first passion, virtue his second. He has not discovered that sublime truth that a bold, unequivocal virtue is the best handmaid even to the wavering policy he pursues."

So Jefferson sat at the Legation and dispassionately reviewed the events passing daily before his eyes. No man was less an alarmist. We are told that he

" preserved his incredulity, accepted nothing upon mere rumour, and personally investigated occurrences. If a rumour reached him that 'three thousand people had fallen in the streets,' he and his secretary, William Short, would go to the spot, and, after minute enquiry, reduce the number to three. He would not even trust the official or newspaper reports, but rode out to Versailles 'to satisfy myself of what has passed there, for nothing can be believed but what one sees or has from an eye-witness.' "

Exactly how much influence did Jefferson exert upon the actors in these preliminary scenes of the great Revolution? As to the influence of his country—the force of the example of the American Revolution—there can be no doubt whatever.

Jefferson wrote to Madison from Paris that the French revolutionists regarded Americans as " a model for their imitation," and adds: " Our authority has been treated like that of the Bible, open to explanation, but not to question."

The American Revolution " sent back to France besides private soldiers, who had opened wide their eyes at the spectacle of a country without nobility or peasants, also young captains and colonels and majors and a few generals even—generally of the poorer nobility—who had caught the American spirit and found it incompatible with the *ancien régime* and preferable to it." [1]

On July 9, 1789, the Duke of Dorset, British Ambassador at Paris, wrote to Pitt:

" Mr. Jefferson, the American Ambassador at this Court, has been a great deal consulted by the principal leaders of the Tiers État; and I have great reason to think that it is

[1] Sharp Williams: *Thomas Jefferson.*

owing to his advice that the order called itself L'Assemblée Nationale."

This was certainly an important point, whose significance to the movement which ended by swamping the two other estates, cannot be underestimated.

Afterwards the popular leaders tried to draw the American Minister still further into their secret councils. But he saw the impropriety of this and drew back, although he could not but have been gratified when they proceeded to emulate his own celebrated document by drawing up a Declaration of Rights.

"There being much concord of sentiment on the elements of this instrument, it was liberally framed, and passed with a very general approbation. They then [relates Jefferson] appointed a Committee for the redaction of a project of a Constitution, at the head of which was the Archbishop of Bordeaux. I received from him, as Chairman of the Committee, a letter of July 20, requesting me to attend and assist at their deliberations; but I excused myself on the obvious considerations that my mission was to the king as Chief Magistrate of the nation, that my duties were limited to the concerns of my own country, and forbade me to intermeddle with the internal transactions of that in which I had been received under a specific character only."

As a result of a revolutionary deputation meeting at the American Legation Jefferson says:

"Duties of exculpation were now incumbent on me. I waited on Count Montmorin the next morning, and explained to him with truth and candour how it had happened that my house had been made the scene of conferences of such a character. . . . I told him I knew too well the duties I owed to the King, to the nation, and to my own country to take any part in councils concerning their internal government, and that I should persevere with care in the character of a neutral and passive spectator, with wishes only, and very sincere ones, that those measures might prevail which would be for the greatest good of the nation."

When, on August 4, the National Assembly abolished all class privileges, Jefferson wrote:

"Thus there went down at one sweeping blow all titles of rank, all the abusive privileges of feudalism, the tithes and casuals of the clergy, all provincial privileges."

This was three weeks after the fall of the Bastille; Jefferson lingered on in Paris for two months longer. But he was anxious now to return to America, and had applied for leave of absence. When this had been granted he turned over the affairs of the Legation to William Short as Chargé d'affaires, and on September 26 set out for home.

In this, as he thought, temporary abandonment of his post, Jefferson seems to have been confident he had seen the worst of a troublesome business and that henceforward regenerated France would travel more comfortably along the road to national happiness and prosperity. He certainly cannot be said to have been disillusioned by the violent events of the hour. If anything, his love and admiration for France were greater than ever. Jefferson is himself the author of a familiar panegyric more glowing and unstinted than that uttered by any other representative whom America has ever sent to Paris:

"I cannot leave this great and good country without expressing my sense of its pre-eminence of character among the nations of the earth. A more benevolent people I have never known, nor greater warmth and devotedness in their select friendships.

"*In a comparison of this with other countries we have the proof of primacy, which was given to Themistocles after the battle of Salamis. Every general voted to himself the first reward of valour, and the second to Themistocles. To ask the travelled inhabitant of any nation, In what country on earth would you rather live?—Certainly in my own, where are all my friends, my relations, and the earliest and sweetest affections and recollections of my life. Which would be your second choice?* France."

As a pendant to this, on July 22, 1789, Jefferson's shocked fellow-countryman and official successor was penning his own and very different apostrophe: "Gracious God, *what* a people!"

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

On reaching Philadelphia Franklin was chosen a member and afterwards the head of the Executive Council, and in 1787, despite his years and infirmities, became a delegate of the Constitutional Convention, in which he took no inconsiderable part. One of his last public acts was to sign a memorial to Congress as President of the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery. He died April 17, 1790, at the age of eighty-four, and is buried in Philadelphia.

Jefferson returned to America to become President Washington's first Secretary of State, but the subordinate office was not congenial to him and he retired at the close of 1793. In 1800 he was elected President, and again in 1804. Later, he retired to his estate of Monticello, where he passed the rest of his life in reading, authorship and the communion of his political friends. He died on July 4, 1826.

NOTE TO CHAPTER II

The use of the title "America" as a popular locution for the English Colonies on the continent of North America had existed from early in the seventeenth century. On the establishment of the Republic the possible confusion of the title America with the continental designation was not lost sight of, but "America" too generally connected the Thirteen Colonies to be displaced in favour of any other, and it continued to be used in public writings, speeches and in all but formal official documents, when the full title, the United States of America, was given. As time passed, other "United States" came to spring up in the western hemisphere without, however, greatly impairing the exclusive title of the first great Republic to "America" or of its people to be "Americans." "United States" is now properly regarded as a federal designation analogous to "United Kingdom" or "United Provinces," for domestic use only. Brazil, Mexico and Colombia are equally United States.

On this point Mr. W. R. Castle, of the State Department, writes me:

"The circular instruction about the use of the title 'American' issued under date of August 3, 1904, directed that hereafter in correspondence and in printing official stationery and in cutting new seals

the adjective used shall be 'American' instead of 'United States.' It may be added that the wor 'Amderican' has become the fixed and approved practice of the Department in its correspondence."

As a matter of fact, there is little confusion save in the minds of those people who attach an esoteric importance to vast geographical areas, often arbitrarily delimited, or those curious pedants who would, let us say, accuse Hampton of arrogating to itself the nominal prerogatives of Northampton and Southampton. I once had an interesting correspondence on this subject with Mr. Whitelaw Reid, who afterwards dealt with it in one of his English addresses. It is a great pity that the chief geographical societies of the world could not get together, and if a separate designation for half the planet is really necessary, rename at least one of the continents Columbia, and the other Isabella. As the American poet and scholar, the late George Cram Cook, once wrote: "We misnamed the land. If our half-sphere of this star-speck, the earth, was to be named for any one of the microscopic specks that crawl upon it, it should have been for that brave, believing gentleman, Columbus, whose name is the name of a dove." But America, as the name of the nation, is now universally acknowledged and is not to be displaced.

The curious reader will find the subject discussed in the author's *The New America: a study of the Imperial Republic* (1904).

CHAPTER III

MORRIS (1792–94)

IT was six months before Jefferson left Paris in the firm belief that France had triumphantly weathered her political storms that there had arrived in the French capital one of the most brilliant of the younger statesmen of America. Gouverneur Morris had already played his part at the bar, in Congress, and in the Government, and was now engaged in making a large fortune in foreign commerce.

Morris was then only thirty-seven. He belonged to the colonial landed aristocracy and was born in the family manor-house at Morrisania. His mother was one of the Huguenot Gouverneurs, settled in New York since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; and it was perhaps, as Theodore Roosevelt surmises, the French blood in his veins that gave him the "alert vivacity and keen sense of humour that distinguished him from most of the great Revolutionary statesmen who were his contemporaries."

Before he was twenty, and four years before the Revolution, Morris was licensed to practise as an attorney and did very well at the law, having marked social and personal advantages.

During the War of Independence Gouverneur's elder brother, Staats Long Morris, remained a royalist, rose to be a major-general in the British Army and married the Duchess of Gordon. He himself in 1775 was chosen a member of the Provincial Congress and two years later a delegate from New York to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia. Thereafter he took a prominent part in the organization of the new Government.

Young Morris soon established confidential relations with the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. Washington at once recognized in him a man upon whose help he could rely in many matters connected with the army, and he became

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

one of the General's warmest supporters in Congress. Morris was one of a committee appointed to receive Gérard, the new French Minister, and he was also selected by Congress to draft the instructions sent to Franklin, at the Court of Versailles. As testimony to the closeness of Franco-American relations, he showed these instructions to Gérard in Philadelphia, and the conversation between the two men is disclosed in the despatches of Gérard to the French Court. It appears that the Americans were anxious to undertake the conquest of Canada, a project Washington did not consider feasible. The French secretly opposed it, it being always their policy that Canada should continue in English hands.

Throughout this early period Morris figures much in Philadelphia, and was always welcome at dinner-parties and dances. He was a tall, handsome man, well-read and a capital story-teller, with a perpetual fund of high spirits. Then came the accident which deprived him of his leg. It was his custom to drive about Philadelphia in a phaeton with a pair of spirited horses. One day these took fright and threw him out. His leg was so badly broken that it had to be amputated. Morris took the mishap very philosophically —declaring that he would probably be a *steadier* man with one leg than two. "The leg is gone, and there is an end of the matter." And indeed the substitution of a wooden limb seemed to make little difference to his temper and habits of life.

In 1781 Morris, having come to the front as the author of a series of essays on the finances, was appointed assistant Secretary of Finance, which appointment he held, under his chief, Robert Morris, for three years and a half, until the beginning of 1785. Subsequently he took part in the debates on the Constitution and then, having in the meantime engaged in several successful commercial undertakings, suddenly gave up politics and public service and set sail for France at the close of 1788.

Morris arrived in Paris on February 3, 1789, three months before the meeting of the States-General. His reputation in America had preceded him, and he was already personally acquainted with many distinguished Frenchmen. On his arrival he straightway called upon both Jefferson, the

Minister, and the Marquis de Lafayette. By them he was invited to dine on the following nights, and afterwards they were much in each other's company.

Although Morris was friendly enough with Jefferson, the two men were in their views completely at variance. In Morris's Journal we read :

" Call on Mr. Jefferson, and sat a good while. General conversation on character and politics. I think he does not form very just estimates of character, but rather assigns too many to the humble rank of fools ; whereas in life the gradations are infinite and each individual has his peculiarities of fort and feeble."

Again he sums up Jefferson's attitude towards the oncoming Revolution.

" He and I differ in our systems of politics. He, with all the leaders of liberty here, is desirous of annihilating distinctions of order. How far such views may be right respecting mankind in general is, I think, extremely problematical. But with respect to this nation I am sure they are wrong, and cannot eventuate well."

Nevertheless, he could write :

" I consider France as the natural ally of my country, and, of course, that we are interested in her prosperity ; besides, to say the truth, I love France."

As for Lafayette, he writes that he is " full of politics ; he appears to be too republican for the genius of his country."

When Lafayette showed him the draft of the celebrated French Declaration of Rights, he noted :

" I gave him my opinions, and suggested several amendments tending to soften the high-coloured expressions of freedom. *It is not by sounding words that revolutions are produced.*"

Here, again, he differed from Jefferson.

Elsewhere he writes that " the young nobility have brought themselves to an active faith in the natural equality of mankind, and spurn at everything which looks like restraint." Some of their number, however, he considered to be actuated

by considerations more tangible than mere sentiment. He chronicles a dinner with some members of the National Assembly, where "one, a noble representing the *Tiers*, is so vociferous against his own order that I am convinced he means to rise by his eloquence and finally will, I expect, vote with the opinion of the Court, let that be what it may."

The American newcomer was considered "too much of an aristocrat" in the *salon* of the Comtesse de Tesse, the resort of "republicans of the first feather," and at first was rather coldly received there. But later in the year Morris records:

"I find Madame de Tesse is become a convert to my principles. We have a gay conversation of some minutes of their affairs, in which I mingle sound maxims of government with that piquant *légèreté* which the nation delights in. She insists that I dine with her at Versailles the next time I am there. We are vastly gracious, and all at once, in a serious tone, '*Mais attendez, madame, est-ce que je suis trop aristocrate?*' To which she answers, with a smile of gentle humility, '*Oh, mon Dieu, non!*'"

To Washington, with whom he was in constant correspondence, Morris wrote:

"The middle party, who mean well, have unfortunately acquired their ideas of government from books, and are admirable fellows upon paper; but, as it happens, somewhat unfortunately, that the men who live in the world are very different from those who dwell in the heads of philosophers, it is not to be wondered at if the systems taken out of books are fit for nothing but to be put back into books again."

And once again:

"They have all that romantic spirit, and all those romantic ideas of government, which happily for America, we were cured of before it was too late."

Morris thought the French had never had the chance to gain wisdom by experience.

"As they have hitherto felt severely the authority exercised in the name of their princes, every limitation of that power seems to them desirable. Never having felt the evils of too

weak an executive, the disorders to be apprehended from anarchy make as yet no impression."

For himself:

"I have steadily combated the violence and excess of those persons who, either inspired with an enthusiastic love of freedom, or prompted by sinister designs, are disposed to drive everything to extremity. Our American example has done them good; but, like all novelties, liberty runs away with their discretion, if they have any.

"They want an American constitution with the exception of a King instead of a President, without reflecting that they have not American citizens to support that constitution. . . . Whoever desires to apply in the practical science of government those rules and forms which prevail and succeed in a foreign country must fall into the same pedantry with our young scholars, just fresh from the university, who would fain bring everything to the Roman standard. . . . The scientific tailor who should cut after Grecian or Chinese models would not have many customers, either in London or Paris; and those who look to America for their political forms are not unlike the tailors in Laputa, who, as Gulliver tells us, always take measures with a quadrant."

In another letter to Washington he painted the outlook in sombre colours:

"The materials for a revolution in this country are very indifferent. Everybody agrees that there is an utter prostration of morals; but this general proposition can never convey to an American mind the degree of depravity. It is not by any figure of rhetoric or force of language that the idea can be communicated. . . . There are men and women who are greatly and eminently virtuous: I have the pleasure to number many in my own acquaintance, but they stand forward from a background deeply and darkly shaded. It is, however, from such crumbling matter that the great edifice of freedom is to be erected here. Perhaps, like the stratum of rock which is spread under the whole surface of their country, it may harden when exposed to the air; but it seems quite as likely that it will fall and crush the builders. I own to you that I am not without such apprehensions, for there is one fatal principle which pervades all ranks. It is a perfect indifference to the violation of engagements. In-

constancy is so mingled in the blood, marrow and very essence of this people, that when a man of high rank and importance laughs to-day at what he seriously asserted yesterday, it is considered as in the natural order of things. Consistency is a phenomenon. Judge, then, what would be the value of an association, should such a thing be proposed and even adopted. The great mass of the common people have no religion but their priests, no law but their superiors, no morals but their interest. These are the creatures who, led by drunken curates, are now on the high road *à la liberté*."

Among the most famous of the *salons* which Morris regularly attended was that of Madame de Staël; yet there was not a little contempt mixed with his regard for the renowned daughter of Necker, whose language and conduct appear to have been highly indelicate. He also frequented the *salon* of Madame de Flahaut, the friend of Talleyrand and Montesquieu. He found her a clever, accomplished little woman, fond of writing romances, and a thorough *intrigante*. As to her venality, once, when dining with Morris and Talleyrand, she observed in perfect good faith that, if the latter was made minister, "they must be sure to make a million for her." No hardened *Panamiste* of a century later could have spoken more cynically.

He early became acquainted with the Duchess of Orleans, wife of Philippe Egalité, that "vicious voluptuary of liberal leanings and clouded character." He met her at the house of Madame de Chastellux, and after his first interview he notes that the Duchess was "handsome enough to punish the duke for his irregularities." Although still seeming in love with her husband, the lady was not averse to seeking a little sentimental consolation from her new American friend, to whom she confided, in their intimacy, that she was weary at heart and unhappy. But Morris adroitly avoided the lady's advances.

Although originally prejudiced in favour of Louis XVI, believing him "to be an honest and good man," Morris very soon began to despise the King for his weakness.

He wrote to Washington:

"If the reigning prince were not the small-beer character that he is, there can be but little doubt that, watching events

and making a tolerable use of them, he would regain his authority; but what will you have from a creature who, situated as he is, eats and drinks, sleeps well and laughs, and is as merry a grig as lives? The idea that they will give him some money, which he can economize, and that he will have no trouble in governing, contents him entirely. Poor man! He little thinks how unstable is his situation. He is beloved, but it is not with the sort of love which a monarch should inspire. It is that kind of good-natured pity which one feels for a led captive. There is, besides, no possibility of serving him, for at the slightest show of opposition he gives up everything and every person."

Of the Comte d'Artois, afterwards Charles X, he remarks that he had "neither sense to counsel himself, nor to choose counsellors for himself, much less to counsel others."

Morris thought Necker "a very poor financier. This I know will sound like heresy in the ears of most people, but it is true. The plans he has proposed are feeble and inept."

Talleyrand, then Bishop of Autun, appeared to this American observer to be "a sly, cool, cunning, ambitious and malicious man. I know not why conclusions so disavantageous to him are formed in my mind, but it is so, and I cannot help it."

After the fall of the Bastille, Morris writes in his Diary:

"July 22. After dinner, walk a little under the arcade of the Palais Royal, waiting for my carriage. In this period the head and body of M. de Toulon are introduced in triumph, the head on a pike, the body dragged naked on the earth. Afterwards this horrible exhibition is carried through the different streets. His crime is, to have accepted a place in the Ministry. This mutilated form of an old man of seventy-five is shown to his son-in-law, Berthier, the Intendant of Paris; and afterwards he also is put to death and cut to pieces, the populace carrying about the mangled fragments with a savage joy. Gracious God, *what* a people!"

He too, like Minister Jefferson, was present at the opening of the States-General, "the beginning of the revolution." But how differently each regarded it! This body, even at the outset, he viewed with great distrust, considering that "none of the delegates showed especial capacity for grappling

with the terrible dangers and difficulties surrounding them." He notes the extreme enthusiasm with which the King was greeted and the studied and insulting coldness accorded to Queen Marie Antoinette.

"She was exceedingly hurt. I cannot help feeling the mortification which the poor Queen meets with, for I see only the woman; and it seems unmanly to treat a woman with unkindness. . . . Not one voice is heard to wish her well. I would certainly raise mine if I were a Frenchman; but I have no right to express a sentiment, and in vain solicit those who are near me to do it. . . . At last [he continues] the Queen rises and, to my great satisfaction, she hears, for the first time in several months, the sound of '*Vive la Reine!*' She makes a low curtsy, and this produces a louder acclamation, and that a lower curtsy."

What pathos dwells in this picture!

In March 1790 Morris went to London upon instructions from Washington to negotiate certain matters with the British Government; but, although he spent most of the year in London, he failed to accomplish anything. The feeling in England, in spite of Adams's efforts, was still too hostile; there was no disposition to make a commercial treaty nor to appoint —which was desiderated—a British Minister to America.

Early in 1791, on Morris's return from the mission to London, he resumed relations with Lafayette, whom he found fuller of his impractical theories than ever and less than ever disposed to listen to his American friend's advice. In vain the latter told him that things had now come to such a pass in France that it was "no longer a question of liberty, but simply who shall be master." The time had come when the folly of the aristocracy and the madness of the populace must be checked, and in the cause of stable government all good citizens should rally to the existing executive—that is to say, the throne. In his opinion the National Assembly was fast falling into contempt, and the "thing called a Constitution" worthless. Each country required to have its own form of government, and an American Constitution would *never do for France.* Above all, stability was urgently wanted, the administration must be strengthened, and good and able men summoned to the council.

It is curious to find Morris anticipating Napoleon III's policy and telling Lafayette that at the present juncture of affairs France's only hope of salvation lay in a foreign war. Such a war would turn the popular ardour now inflamed against the aristocracy into a new channel, and "there was no word perhaps in the dictionary which would take the place of *aristocrate* so readily as *Anglais*." To illustrate his contention he observed (what is undoubtedly true) that "If Britain had declared war in 1774 against the house of Bourbon, the now United States would have bled freely in her cause." Lafayette, while sorrowfully admitting that his troops would readily follow him into action, but would not mount guard when it rained, could not be induced to take any step in accordance with Morris's counsel.

In his correspondence with President Washington, Morris opened his mind freely. He drew a vivid picture of the chaos about him while yet fully aware of the possible effects of the convulsion upon the future welfare of the masses of the French people.

Since Jefferson had returned to America no fresh minister had been appointed, and Short, the Chargé d'affaires, was carrying on as best he could.

Little wonder, then, that Washington should have desired that such a man as Gouverneur Morris should take his place as representative of his country in France—if indeed there were any other statesman in America who would have accepted the post at such a time. For the President almost wholly shared Morris's views with regard to France, as also did Hamilton, although to Jefferson and his party all that Morris wrote and stood for was anathema. Accordingly, early in 1792 Morris received his appointment as Minister, despite strong opposition in the Senate. In forwarding his credentials the President took occasion to warn his friend to show more temper and caution than his enemies charged him with habitually displaying. Washington thought that a brilliant, lively imagination was "the primary cause of those sallies which too often offend and of that ridicule of character which begets enmity not easy to be forgotten, but which might easily be avoided if it were under the control of caution and prudence." By such an injunction, said Washington,

"I give a proof of my friendship, if I give none of my policy."

By this time the new Minister's views were no secret on both sides of the Atlantic, and his friendly attitude to the King and contempt both of the populace and of the short-sighted courtiers, excited the distrust and dislike of the Jeffersonians at home. Morris, when he accepted the mission, realized the difficulties and the dangers of the task before him. He felt it would need all his powers to hold on to the post.

Under such circumstances, and at such a time, then, did the new Minister begin one of the most thrilling and chequered missions not only in American, but in all diplomatic history. During the Reign of the Terror he was the only foreign Minister who dared to remain at his post. Yet, apart from one well-meant extra-diplomatic adventure, shortly to be described, he aimed at a perfect correctness in his official conduct and comported himself throughout the whole of his mission with unexampled coolness and dignity. His first act on receiving his credentials was to call upon the Foreign Minister. It was true, he said, that while a mere private individual, he had in his earnest desire to preserve France from anarchy, freely mingled in current events, had spoken his mind freely upon the Constitution, and had tendered his counsel to the King and his Ministers; but, now that he had been given official status, he would adopt a different course.

In June 1792 Morris was presented at Court. On the 20th of that month the mob forced the gates of the palace and compelled the King to put on the red cap. At that moment, recorded Morris, the Constitution "gave its last groan." He told Lafayette that "in six weeks all would be over," and his prediction was accurately fulfilled. When, in the course of July, Morris repeatedly regarded the spectacle of the crazy mob, he "could not help thanking God from his heart that in his own favoured land there was no such populace," earnestly praying that American enlightenment and morality would for ever avert there such a display of popular madness. He saw with horror the *canaille* being daily incited by bloodthirsty demagogues to worse and ever worse

excesses. He foresaw the King's doom, and although he felt pity, it was a pity, as we have seen, full of contempt. In the very crisis of their fate, the Court was involved in a series of miserable intrigues "unworthy of anything above the rank of a footman or a chambermaid. Everyone had his or her little project, and every little project had some abettors. Strong, manly counsels frightened the weak, alarmed the envious and wounded the enervated minds of the lazy and luxurious." Calling at the palace one morning, he learnt that all there had stayed up the whole night expecting to be murdered.

"The voracity of the Court," wrote the American Minister, "the haughtiness of the nobles, the sensuality of the church, have met their punishment in the road of their transgressions. The oppressor has been squeezed by the hands of the oppressed; but there remains yet to be acted an awful scene in this great tragedy, played on the theatre of the universe for the instruction of mankind."

Before he had been established in his Legation, Morris became involved in a desperate and chivalrous undertaking. It was one provoked by his sympathy for the unfortunate Sovereign and his Queen—nothing less than a plan to promote their escape from Paris. Other schemes were afoot, but they were ill-considered and futile; that arranged by Morris in concert with M. de Moncial, one of the royal Ministers and certain other courtiers, was favoured by Louis and would probably have succeeded had not the King's nerve collapsed at the critical moment. When the chance of success had passed it was July and Morris was American Minister. The King sent for him and confessed his regret that he had not followed his advice and begged the Minister to take charge of the royal papers and money. The custody of the former was declined, but Morris accepted the money, amounting so some seven hundred and fifty thousand livres. This sum was to be expended in hiring and bribing those individuals who were obstructing the King's flight. The plan might have succeeded had poor Louis used despatch, but before he could bring himself to move the terrible events of August 10 supervened: the loyal Swiss guards fell at their post, and the

plot failed. Some of the plotters came under suspicion and one, d'Angremont, was arrested and executed. Through a liberal use of the money in Morris's hands the others were enabled to escape. Finally, four years later, the murdered Sovereign's daughter, the Duchesse d'Angoulême, then an exile in Austria, received from Morris a detailed account of his stewardship and a draft for what money remained—a hundred and forty-seven pounds.

A more improper and risky exploit for the Minister of a foreign Power, and especially such a republic as the United States, to embark upon cannot be conceived. But, considering the motives which impelled him and the great risks he faced, it only adds to our admiration for the man.

At this time Morris was installed in a house (afterwards occupied by Minister Monroe) at 48 rue de la Planche, Faubourg St. Germain. Ann Cary Morris, who edited his Diary, says:

"To judge from the allusions he makes to furniture, porcelaine and hangings, to his garden and the general arrangement of the house, it must have been eminently fitted for the entertaining and lavish hospitality which characterized it. There was a tun of sauturne in the cellar and a tun of claret, to say nothing of pipes of Madeira and port."

Besides the house in Paris Morris had a country place at Sainport, a modest *pied-à-terre* on the Seine. Of it he wrote to Robert Morris [1]:

"I have about twenty acres of land about twenty miles from the barrier of Paris in summer, and from hence to Fontainebleau about fifteen."

His house there had "a pretty little garden and some trees." And the Seine "was about as broad as the Schuylkill, but deeper." So, when Paris grew too violent and oppressive Morris sought refuge among his trees and flowers at Sainport.

But the fateful August 10, 1792, when the whole city was at the mercy of the mob, when terrified persons of both sexes were hunted from street to street and house to house

[1] This Morris was no relative, but a close friend and associate, both in business and politics.

like animals, unknowing in their utter helplessness where to go or where they might take sanctuary, innocent of any crime save that of their birth and condition, saw Morris at his post in Paris. Many of these intended victims instinctively turned for help to the official representative of America. To succour them in their distress was to invoke the anger and violence of the mob, but the gallant Morris was equal to the occasion and ready, if need be, to risk his own life in the cause of humanity. From early morning till past midnight on that day the shelter of the American Legation was sought by people " who had nowhere else to go, and who felt that within his walls they were sure of at least a brief safety from the maddened savages in the streets. As far as possible they were sent off to places of greater security ; but some had to stay with him till the storm lulled for a moment." [1] An American who was in Paris after viewing the sack of the Tuileries was prompted to visit the Legation of his country. He found there the American Minister surrounded by a score of people of both sexes, among them the old Count d'Estaing, and other distinguished men, who had fought " side by side with us in our war for independence and whom our flag protected in their hour of direst need. Silence reigned, only broken occasionally by the weeping of the women and children." As his visitor was leaving Morris took him to one side and told him that he had no doubt there were persons on the watch who would find fault with his conduct as a Minister in receiving and protecting these people ; but that " they had come of their own accord, uninvited."

" Whether my house will be a protection to them or to me, God only knows ; but I will not turn them out of it, let what will happen to me ; you see, sir, they are all persons to whom our country is more or less indebted, and, had they no such claim upon me, it would be inhuman to force them into the hands of the assassins."

Up to now Morris had kept a Diary of passing events ; but fearing this might fall into the hands of the men now at the head of affairs or implicate his friends, he abruptly dis-

[1] Theodore Roosevelt : *Gouverneur Morris.*

continued it. He grew also more circumspect, finding that his letters were frequently opened. But, as regards his own opinions, he let them freely be known. In his eyes, he said, the whole French nation was now huddled together, panic-stricken, like cattle before a thunder-storm. He profoundly distrusted their capacity for self-government. Although they were pinning their faith to their notion of a republic, he saw that they would be disillusioned and be ready for any form of despotism, if only it would guarantee them security to life and property. Their cardinal error was in thinking that to enjoy liberty they had only to abolish authority.

Amongst Morris's many correspondents was the daring corsair, John Paul Jones, who was anxious for re-employment in the American service. Morris was obliged to tell him that he did not believe an American Navy would be created for some years to come, and advised Captain Jones to go into the service of the Russians, as he expected there would soon be warm work on the Baltic, even giving him a hint as to what would probably be the best plan of campaign. Jones wanted to come to Paris, but Morris for a time dissuaded him.

"A journey to this city can, I think, produce nothing but the expense attending it; for neither pleasure nor profit can be expected here, by one of your profession in particular; and, except that it is a more dangerous residence than many others, I know of nothing which may serve to your inducement."

Nevertheless, the "first American Admiral" came, fell mortally sick, and sent for Morris, who was then (July 1792) engrossed in many momentous affairs, including the proposed escape of the Sovereigns.

When the Minister arrived at Jones's lodgings he found the veteran already in his death-throes. He begged Morris to look after his affairs, and a will was drawn up. Morris was obliged to return to his house for dinner; when he went back to the hero's lodgings he found him dead.

More than a century passed and then, during the mission and through the exertions of Ambassador Horace Porter,

the body of John Paul Jones was exhumed from its long-hidden Paris resting-place and transferred to American soil.[1]

Too late did another, and far more distinguished foreigner in the American service, realize the value of Morris's advice and the accuracy of his predictions. For a long time Lafayette and his wife had avoided the American Minister; now, when again they met, the disillusioned Marquis addressed his friend with all his old-time cordiality. But Lafayette was in for a hard time: he fell inevitably between the upper and nether millstones. His troops deserted him, he was proclaimed by the Assembly, and fled for his life across the frontier. There he was to pay for his republicanism: the allied monarchs seized him and threw him into prison. When Morris heard of it he could not restrain his contempt.

"Thus," he wrote, "his circle is completed. He has spent his fortune on a revolution, and is now crushed by the wheel which he put in motion. He lasted longer than I expected."

But this mood passed, and in the end Morris proved one of Lafayette's best friends. From a Dutch prison the Marquis wrote, declared he had surrendered his status as a French subject, was now an American citizen, and called upon the American representatives in Europe to procure his release. Notwithstanding the services he had rendered the United States, such a claim could hardly be supported. Washington, indeed, made a strong personal appeal to the Austrian Emperor, but in vain. Lafayette remained in prison until the peace came in 1797. Learning that he was suffering actual privation, Morris despatched ten thousand florins by the American bankers at Amsterdam, pledging his own personal security in case Congress disallowed the money.[2] But Congress did not disallow the money: it was voted as

[1] See Chapter XX.

[2] Yet Lafayette had thus written privately to Washington (March 15, 1792) when he heard that Morris had been named Minister:

"Permit me, dear General, to make an observation for yourself alone. Personally I am a friend of Gouverneur Morris, and have always been, in private, quite content with him, but the aristocratic and really contra-revolutionary principles which he has avowed render him little fit to represent the only Government resembling ours. . . . I cannot repress the desire that American and French principles should be in the heart and on the lips of the Ambassador of the United States in France."

part compensation for Lafayette's military services to America fifteen years before.

Even more zealous was Morris on behalf of Madame de Lafayette and her children, for he not only lent the poor, proud, distracted lady 100,000 livres to discharge her immediate necessities; but when she, too, was jailed by the Paris mob his personal intervention saved her from the guillotine. No wonder she should have overwhelmed him with her gratitude, which would endure, she wrote, "while life lasts."

Meanwhile, the entire diplomatic corps had fled from Paris as quickly as they could get passports from the new republican Government, which was itself in no hurry to grant them. When Morris called on Lord Gower, the British Ambassador, with whom he was on intimate terms, he found his lordship in a towering rage because his passports had not arrived. He said he had burned his papers, and strongly advised the American to do the same; but Morris rejected such advice. Nor did he agree that "honour required him to quit the country," although the same advice was given him by Talleyrand, who had applied for his own passport.[1] Gower was far from pleased at the tone of levity with which his visitor referred to the manifest panic at the British Embassy, "which exhibition of spirits," observes Morris complacently, "his lordship could hardly bear."

To Jefferson, now Secretary of State, Morris wrote that the official counsels he had been receiving were chiefly inspired by fear. True, his situation was not without danger; but he presumed that when the President appointed him to his present post it was not for his own pleasure and safety, but for the interests of his country, and these interests he could certainly serve best by staying where he was. Jefferson, at least, never denied to Morris the quality of courage.

At the same time it must be said that Morris's decision gave, at the time, pleasure to the new Government. They could not help realizing that America was now their only friend amongst the nations. But to restrain their followers or always curb their own arrogance was not so easy. Morris was not to be bullied, nor would he permit any derogation of his official dignity. It was not long before the new

[1] He eventually, like many others, went to America.

Jacobin Foreign Minister and his friends were engaged for their private profit in a highly nefarious scheme relating to the American debt, and demanded the American envoy's approval. Morris refused point-blank, whereupon the Foreign Minister sent him an insulting letter. Instantly upon its receipt, Morris demanded his passports. This brought the Minister to terms; he despatched a sullen apology, begged the American envoy to reconsider his resolve, and offered full satisfaction in every particular.

Yet, while the administrative heads might be civil as a rule, their subordinates often subjected Morris to affronts and anxieties. As an example of the Minister's behaviour in trying moments, one evening a number of people, headed by a section commissary, entered the Legation and announced that they were come to search it for arms concealed on the premises. Morris flamed up in anger. They should not examine the house; it contained no arms, he said, but if it did, they should not so much as touch a musket or a cutlass. Who was the blockhead or poltroon who had informed against him? He would promptly bring him to punishment. As Morris towered over them, stamping his wooden leg now and then in his vehemence, the intruders lost heart and soon melted through the door.

Early the next morning the commissary turned up at the Legation with many apologies, which Morris coldly accepted.

This sort of intrusion was repeated with a similar result. Morris was twice arrested, once for not having a *carte de citoyen* and once, while in the country, because his passport was alleged to be out of date. On the streets his life was often in jeopardy. On one occasion he was only saved by the opportune sight of his wooden leg and the cry that he was "a cripple of the American War for Freedom"—which provoked a grim smile from Morris as he coolly hobbled off.

Yet all this time, whatever was happening in the streets, in the prisons, and on the scaffold, there was still the business of the Legation to be done and the interests of his country and countrymen to be protected. If a decree of the Assembly was passed damaging to either, Morris wrote off in protest to the Minister. American citizens, especially sailors, were continually getting themselves into scrapes, from which

they called upon Morris to rescue them, and American merchants invoked the Minister's aid, which it was sometimes quite impossible to give. At such times they wrote home complaints that Morris had not got them the full redress they sought—forgetting that the offender was powerful and the administration feeble. These compatriots of his, commented Morris, found it " the easiest thing in the world to get anything from the French Government *until they had tried.* Then they realized their mistake."

To Morris fell the duty of paying France the balance of the money borrowed during the American War of Independence, the interest on which had been regularly met. When Morris became Minister there was lying at the bank in Amsterdam a large sum which it was agreed between himself and William Short, now Minister at the Hague, might be applied to liquidating the French debt. But before arrangements could be completed the monarchy was overturned. To whom should the cash be paid ? If to the Government *de facto,* who could say that that Government would not be deposed in a month and their successors repudiate the fact of such payment ? Short and, later, the American Secretary of the Treasury, thought that the money should be withheld. Morris was for paying it at once, and did so pay it. His action was justified : Governments in France went and came, but the French nation tacitly acknowledged the liquidation, and no complaint was ever made.

At the same time he set his face against the faction in power, when, for private reasons of their own, they tried to divert American money for the purchase of provisions and arms for St. Domingo, and the attempt in consequence failed.

As the weeks and months wore on, Morris's danger increased, and the gloomy condition of Paris during the Terror would have depressed any ordinary spirits—a gloom only relieved by fearful outbreaks of violence and bloodshed. Morris seems generally to have exulted in the danger he ran. What did depress and grieve him was the constant, the almost daily, loss of his friends by the knife of the guillotine—to be seated quietly at dinner, and hear by accident " that a friend was on his way to the place of execution," and to have to sit still and wonder which of the guests dining with him would

be the next to go to the scaffold. The vilest criminals swarmed in the streets, and amused themselves by tearing the earrings from women's ears and snatching away their watches. When the priests shut up in the *carnes* and the prisoners in the Abbaye were murdered, the slaughter, in which eight hundred men were engaged, went on all day.

Morris wrote home that, to give a true picture of France, he would have to " paint it like an Indian warrior, black and red." The scenes that passed were literally beyond the imagination of the American mind. The most hideous and nameless atrocities were so common as to be only alluded to incidentally, and to be recited in the most matter-of-fact way in connexion with other events. For instance, a man applied to the Convention for a recompense for damage done to his quarry, a pit dug deep through the surface of the earth into the stone bed beneath ; the damage consisted in such a number of dead bodies having been thrown into the pit as to choke it up so that he could no longer get men to work it. Hundreds, who had been the first in the land, were thus destroyed without form or trial, and their bodies thrown like dead dogs into the first hole that offered. Two hundred priests were killed for no other crime than having been conscientiously scrupulous about taking the prescribed oath. The guillotine went smartly on, watched with a devilish merriment by the fiends who were themselves to perish by the instrument their own hands had wrought. " Heaven only knew who was next to drink of the dreadful cup ; as far as man could tell, there was to be no lack of liquor for some time to come." [1]

Morris could not but be struck by the bombast and futility of the Allies under the Duke of Brunswick, who invaded France in strength as far as numbers went in 1792, threatening ferocious vengeance upon the Paris republicans, but so utterly without talent or prudence as to do no good at all, unless it was to inflame the body of the nation, and especially Paris, to more desperate resistance than ever. As for the Duke's manifesto, Morris summarized it satirically as : " Be all against me, for I am opposed to you all ; and make a good resistance, for there is no longer any hope."

[1] Roosevelt : *Gouverneur Morris.*

When the unhappy King perished on the scaffold the American Minister reported that he had shown in his death "a better spirit than his life had promised," dying in a manner becoming his dignity, with calm courage, praying that his foes might be forgiven and his deluded people be benefited by his death—his last words being drowned by the drums of the monster, Santerre.

But the Republic was built on an unsound foundation, and could not long endure. "All people of morality and intelligence have long agreed that, as yet, republican virtues are not of Gallic growth." Already the more enlightened Gironde party in power was doomed in its turn; the Mountain under Danton and Marat succeeded, and the Government became a despotism in principle as in practice. The Jacobin tribunals ruled red-handed, with a ferocity unexampled perhaps in all human history.

"It is an emphatical phrase among the patriots that *terror is the order of the day*; some years have elapsed since Montesquieu wrote that the principle of arbitrary governments is *fear*."

Danton fell before Robespierre; Marie Antoinette perished with a dignity which partly atoned for her former follies, and even mean and ignoble Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, who had rechristened himself Égalité, underwent the ordeal of the dread guillotine with courage.

From Morris's pen we have a picture of the infamous Feast of Reason, the terrible culmination of the efforts of the atheists to overthrow the Christian religion and render it ridiculous. Morris watched it in Notre Dame, and describes it as "a kind of opera," in which the President of the Convention and other chief personages of the day adored on bended knees a girl, Saunier by name, half opera dancer, half harlot, "very beautiful and next door to an idiot as to her intellectual gifts," who impersonated the Goddess of Reason. This creature went through her antics on the High Altar itself in a dress specially designed by the painter David to be more indecent than simple nudity, although it was a fitting impersonation and well in keeping with the debasing levity of the hour.

Amongst the foreigners in Paris who had all been loudly proclaiming themselves American citizens and French *Citoyens* was Thomas Paine, the author of *The Rights of Man*, *The Age of Reason* and other books and pamphlets of an atheistic and revolutionary character. Paine had played a useful part in the cause of American Independence and was still in correspondence with Washington and other eminent Americans. Banished from England, he threw himself passionately into the French Revolution, was elected to the Convention, and, after sharing the fortunes of the Gironde, was flung into prison by Robespierre. From there he sent an urgent appeal to Morris to demand his release as an American citizen. But Morris had no love for Paine, whose principles he detested, and declined to compromise himself by espousing his cause too actively. Paine therefore remained in prison, and in the end contrived to escape with his life. We shall hear more of Paine anon.

In Morris's opinion, Americans would "be unwise in the extreme to involve ourselves in the contests of European nations where our weight could be but small, though the loss to ourselves would be certain. We ought to be extremely watchful of foreign affairs, but there is a broad line between vigilance and activity." He thought that while both France and England had violated their treaties, the latter "had behaved worst, and with deliberate intention." He laid particular stress upon the need of an American Navy—"with twenty ships of the line at sea, no nation on earth will dare to insult us." Even apart from individual losses, five years of war would involve more national expense than the support of a navy for twenty years, and until America rendered herself respectable she would continue to be insulted. His words were heeded, and had the Federalists at home remained in power a strong navy would have been created; but Jefferson succeeded to the Presidency, and the work was stopped.

Indeed, as we have seen, Jefferson all along was in utter opposition to nearly all of Morris's ideas, and while he occupied the office of Secretary of State did his best to thwart his country's representative in France, whom he knew to be in the President's favour, failing to answer his letters and

keeping him wholly uninstructed as to events and opinions at home. It was therefore with relief that Morris learnt that Jefferson had been replaced by John Randolph.

All might now have gone smoothly had it not been for the half-crazed exploits of Genêt, the young Frenchman whom the Convention had sent to represent France in America, who carried things with such a high hand and was so insulting to Washington that his recall was imperatively demanded. The Convention assented; the complement to this was, of course, the recall of Gouverneur Morris. And so, after enduring the heat and burden of the bloodiest day in history, Morris was recalled, and his official career in Paris was over.

Yet, although Washington wrote him a generous letter of approval of his conduct as Minister, Morris was bitterly disappointed. He knew he was not popular with the revolutionary authorities; his opinion of them and their excesses he took few pains to conceal; but he was convinced that any Minister who gave satisfaction to the French then in power would be careless of the interests of America.

"I have [he wrote] the consolation to have made no sacrifice either of personal or national dignity, and I believe I should have obtained everything if the American Government had refused to recall me. . . . All our treaties, however onerous, must be strictly fulfilled, according to their true intent and meaning. The honest nation is that which, like the honest man,

> Hath to its plighted faith and vow
> For ever firmly stood,
> And though it promise to its loss,
> Yet makes that promise good."

In his great work on the French Revolution, Taine ranks Morris high among the small number of observers who have recorded clear and sound judgments of those years of confused, formless tumult and horror.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Morris did not quit Europe at the close of his mission, but, having turned over the Legation to his successor, set forth on a series of travels, to Switzerland, to England, to Saxony, Austria and Holland. He took occasion while in Vienna to urge upon the Austrian Government the release of Lafayette, still confined to prison, his wife now with him. He had received the most touching appeals from Madame de Staël, and the Marquis's sister, the Marquise de Montagu, to intercede for the prisoners.

" My sister," wrote the latter, " is in danger of losing the life you saved in the prisons of Paris. . . . Has not he whom Europe numbers among those citizens of whom North America ought to be most proud, has not he the right to make himself heard in favour of a citizen of the United States and of a wife whose life belongs to him, since he has preserved it ? "

But in spite of his efforts the Lafayettes remained prisoners until the peace in 1797, when the General was handed over in Morris's presence to the American Consul at Hamburg.

Two years after Morris's return to America, in 1800, he was elected United States Senator from New York, serving until 1803. He was Chairman of the Erie Canal Commission, and took a deep interest in that great enterprise up to the time of his death in 1816 at the age of sixty-four.

CHAPTER IV

MONROE (1794-96)

"I REALLY thought I was among the last men to whom the proposition would be made."

In such words did James Monroe, then only thirty-six but already Senator from Virginia, acknowledge in 1794 the offer from the Secretary of State, John Randolph, of the vacant French mission.[1] Nor was his surprise unnatural. The future President and champion of the "Monroe Doctrine" was one of the most vehement opponents of the Washington administration. He had been a persistent and often unreasonable obstructionist of Federalist policy. He had been bitterly opposed to the choice of Morris and Jay as foreign envoys, and so hostile to Hamilton that a duel between the two once seemed imminent. Why, then, was he chosen? Washington's first candidate was Thomas Pinckney, then in London assisting Jay to negotiate a treaty with England. But this fell through, and the appointment was offered to James Madison and then to Robert R. Livingston, who was, however, not yet ready to accept it. Aaron Burr's friends also pressed his claims for the post.

The President seriously meditated sending a Republican (or, as we should now say, a Democrat) to France. It was thought the admiration and sympathy for the French and their Revolution which such a man as Monroe shared with Jefferson would procure for him a cordial reception and stem the current which then seemed to be setting in towards a serious international antagonism.

Monroe therefore was offered and accepted the mission.

[1] His physician, Dr. Moran, describes Monroe as "six feet tall, broad, square-shouldered and impressive in appearance. He was a man of rugged physique, raw-boned and by no means handsome."

The lengthy letter of instructions which Secretary Randolph furnished him concluded thus :

" You go, sir, to France to strengthen our friendship with that country ; and you are well acquainted with the line of freedom and ease to which you may advance without betraying the dignity of the United States. You will show our confidence in the French Republic without betraying the most remote remark of undue complaisance. You will let it be seen that, *in case of war with any nation on earth, we shall consider France as our first and natural ally.*"

Although Monroe received his commission on May 28, 1794, it was August before he, his wife and daughter reached the shores of France. In the meantime certain momentous events had happened which considerably upset his calculations. The admirable Robespierre had perished on the scaffold and the Committee of Public Safety had changed its complexion. This was certainly awkward. At first Monroe was in doubt whether it was wise to get into touch with his predecessor, Gouverneur Morris, at all.

" I did not know the ground upon which the Americans stood here," he reported to Secretary Madison, "but suspected, as the acquisition of wealth had been their object in coming, they must have attached themselves to some preceding party and so worn out their reputations."

But mature reflection caused him to change his mind, and he wrote to Morris, then at his country-seat, reporting himself:

" I resolved to await the arrival of my predecessor and present myself as a thing of course with him. I concluded it would do me no detriment, as it was the official mode, and more especially as he would have to file off the moment I took my ground. This was done. He accompanied me to the Office of Foreign Affairs, notified his recall and my succession. I left with the Commissary a copy of my credentials and requested my recognition from the competent department as soon as possible, which was promised."

Monroe goes on to say :

" But my difficulties did not end here. Eight or ten days elapsed and I was not accepted nor had I heard a syllable from the Committee or seen a member. And upon enquiry

JAMES MONROE.

I was informed that a Minister from Geneva had been here six weeks before me and was not yet received. Still further to increase my embarrassments I likewise heard that the Commissary to whom I was presented, being of Robespierre's party, was out of favour, and that probably his letter covering my credentials had not been read by the Committee.

"I could no longer bear with delay. I foresaw that the impression to be expected from the arrival of a new minister might be lost, and that by the trammel of forms and collision of parties I might while away my time here for ever without effect. I was thus therefore resolved to place myself if possible above these difficulties, by addressing myself immediately to the Convention. I knew this would attract the public attention, and, if my country had any weight here, produce a proportional effect not only upon that body but upon every subordinate department."

It must be admitted that, in the language of one of his modern critics,[1] Monroe

"entered upon his new duties with an immense flourish, and rapidly gave a succession of startling proofs that he was a Minister altogether too much to the taste of the frenzied Jacobinical republicans to whom he was accredited. Indeed, his capers were almost as extraordinary as those of certain French commanders in Canada, in their efforts to ingratiate themselves with their Indian allies, than like the performance we should expect from a sober Virginian gentleman on a mission to a civilized nation."

At the same time—

"The fault was really less with him than with his party and with those who sent him. Monroe was an honourable man with a very unoriginal mind, and he simply reflected the wild, foolish views held by all his fellows of the Jeffersonian democratic republican school concerning France—for politics were still French and English, but not yet American."

Morris afterwards wrote to Washington (December 19, 1795):

"Shortly after my successor arrived in Paris (viz. two or at most three days) a person who was in the habit of telling me of what passed called, and began a conversation by saying:

[1] Theodore Roosevelt.

'This new Minister you have sent us will never do here.' 'Why?' 'He is either a blockhead himself or thinks that we are so.' 'I can't suppose either to be the case, as I knew him to be strongly attached to your Revolution. I should think he would succeed very well.' 'No, it is impossible. Only think of a man's throwing himself into the arms of the first person he met on his arrival and telling him he had no doubt but that if they would do what was proper here, he and his friends in America would *turn out Washington. . . .*' 'I cannot believe the fact.' 'You may rely on it. 'Tis true.' . . . I own that I . . . did not believe it."

Monroe's letter was read in the Convention, which, though puzzled at first, referred it to the Committee of Public Safety. This body made a report within two hours. Just as Monroe had anticipated, it was agreed that he should be received by the Convention, "but without any of the absurd ceremonial of the monarchy, and that the President should give him the *accolade fraternelle,* in token of the friendship of the two nations." [1]

That same day a decree was issued granting James Monroe the privilege of appearing on the morrow, August 15, before the National Convention.

An hour or two before the time set for the function the President of the Convention sent to Monroe for a copy of his address. This President was Antoine Philippe Merlin of Douai, a lawyer and deputy from the Département du Nord.

From the files of the *Moniteur* we learn that:

"The Minister entered the hall amidst cries of '*Vive la République!*'; and the President, having announced that Mr. Monroe spoke only the English language,[2] one of the Secretaries was ordered to read the discourse the Minister had prepared. The Minister was conducted to the President, who gave the kiss and the embrace in the midst of universal acclamations of joy, delight and admiration."

Monroe himself reported:

"I thought it expedient to make the occasion as useful

[1] Alger.

[2] In the official minutes, however, "the frantic hatred existing and felt by the French toward the English, would not permit the Convention to recognize our mother tongue as the English language; hence they called it the American language."—E. B. Washburne: *Recollections of a Minister to France.*

as possible in drawing the two republics more closely together by ties of affection, by showing them the interest which every department of our Government took in their success and prosperity. With this view I laid before the Convention, with suitable solemnity, the declarations of the Senate and House of Representatives, and added a similar one for the President. 'America and France [he said in effect] have the same interests and principles; the recollection of common dangers and difficulties will cement the union. The United States are sincerely attached to the liberty, prosperity and happiness of the French Republic. I know that in perpetuating the harmony between the two republics I shall promote the interests of both.'

"The effect surpassed my expectations. My reception occupied an hour and a half of not merely interesting but distressing sensibility for all who beheld. It was with difficulty that I extricated myself from the House and Committee of Public Safety. The cordial declaration of America in favour of France and the French Revolution . . . in view of all Europe, and at a time when they were torn asunder by parties, was a gratification which overpowered them.

"'*Parbleu*,' declared a Frenchman who was present to John Quincy Adams, the American Minister at the Hague, 'it was a *scène attendrissante*.' It was '*une des plus fameuses séances*' of the Convention. There were more than ten thousand persons present. 'He shed tears, he was so much affected. *I saw him cry*.' '*Ah!*' said another, '*c'était aussi bien de quoi faire pleurer*.' Then they said one of the flags had been sent to America. In short, the national character appeared in nothing more conspicuous than in the manner in which they spoke of this occurrence."[1]

Referring to his presentation of the official reply of the United States and House of Representatives to the French Committee of Public Safety, Monroe wrote to Madison:

"I doubt not this measure will be scanned with unfriendly eyes by many in America. They will say that it was intended that these things should have been smuggled in secretly and as secretly deposited afterwards. But they are deceived if they suppose me capable of being the instrument of such purposes. On the contrary, I have endeavoured to take the

[1] C. F. Adams: *Life of J. Q. Adams*.

opposite ground, with a view of producing the best effect here as well as there. And I am well satisfied that it has produced here a good effect. It is certain that we had lost in a great measure the confidence of the nation."

Secretary Randolph did not hear of Robespierre's downfall until October 9, but when he did he at once sent Monroe instructions not to attach himself to "the uncertain fate of any individuals." Next came the news of Monroe's dramatic public appearance under the auspices of Robespierre's successors. This so shocked Washington and the Cabinet that Randolph was instructed to despatch a rebuke. The American Minister to Paris was asked to explain why the hall of the French National Convention had become the "theatre of diplomatic civilities."

"When you left us we all supposed that your reception as Minister would take place in the private chamber of some committee. We should have supposed that an introduction would have brought to mind these ideas: 'The United States are neutral; with the allied Powers jealous of England we are now in treaty; by England we have been impeached for breaches of faith in favour of France; our citizens are notoriously Gallican in their hearts; and therefore in the disclosure of feelings something is due to the possibility of fostering new suspicions.' Under the influence of these sentiments we should have hoped that your address to the National Convention would have been so framed as to leave heart-burning nowhere. . . .

"We do not [continued the Secretary of State ironically] perceive that your instructions have imposed upon you the extreme glow of some parts of your address. . . . You have it still in charge to cultivate the French Republic with zeal, but without any unnecessary *éclat*; because the dictates of sincerity do not demand that we should render notorious all our feelings in favour of that nation."

Randolph eased his official censure by a private note (December 5), observing:

"We are fully sensible of the importance of the friendship of the French Republic. Cultivate it with zeal, proportioned to the value we set upon it. Remember to remove every

suspicion of our preferring a connection with Great Britain, or in any manner weakening our old attachment to France."

Nevertheless, the general feeling among the Federalists was, as the biographer of Chief Justice Marshall says, that "Monroe, a partisan of the Revolutionists, had begun his mission" with a "theatrical blunder."[1]

Certainly, during most of his mission Monroe was under the influence of Paine, now transformed into a venomous enemy of Washington. Monroe himself was probably well-meaning enough, and if his over-enthusiasm were impugned he could point to his instructions: "Let it be seen that, in case of war with any nation on earth, we shall consider France as our first and natural ally."

Shortly after his sensational apparition in the Convention the American Minister bethought him of presenting an American flag to that august body. He committed the flag to the hands of a young naval officer, Captain (afterwards Commodore) Barney, who also made his little speech to the Convention and received an *accolade* from the President. When it was decided to exhume the body of Jean Jacques Rousseau and deposit it in the Panthéon, Barney, holding aloft the flag and accompanied by a nephew of Monroe, headed the American column in the public procession. In the service within the building in honour of Rousseau, the American Minister and his suite were the only strangers permitted to be present. These highly liberal proceedings, as was to be expected, gave much pain in many godly New England homes.

But Monroe's chosen path was not destined to be smooth. At the moment he had been sent to France Chief Justice John Jay had, we remember, gone as envoy to London. The divergence of views in two such diplomats must have led European observers to regard America's foreign policy as shifty and unreliable. For while Jay was bending all his energies to the negotiation of a treaty with Britain, certainly inimical to French interests, Monroe was engaged in demonstrating the warm attachment of the United States to France and the joint antagonism of both to Britain.

[1] Beveridge: *John Marshall.*

France, "in addition to a continued insistence on the execution of the treaties of 1778 and 1788, was urging two lines of policy which marked her diplomacy throughout the period of her final struggle with England. One was the claim which gradually took clearer form, that the rights of the neutral were the possession of the belligerent. She held that it was the duty of the United States to maintain in full their neutral rights against England; that the failure to do so constituted practical alliance with England and justified retaliatory disregard of neutral rights by France." [1]

The mission of Monroe had been accepted as an indication of regard for France. The mission of Jay as explained by Monroe had caused no particular alarm, he being sent to assert American neutral rights. The French believed that he would be unsuccessful, and that his mission would result in war with England.[2]

Then came the startling news of the signature of the Jay Treaty on November 19. The Committee of Public Safety turned to Monroe for information as to its details; but since, as the result of a policy rather difficult to account for, he had been left uninformed by Jay and by the United States Government, he could give only vague assurances that the compact was not inconsistent with American obligations to France.

When the treaty finally reached Monroe he wrote:

"Jay's treaty surpasses all that I feared, great as my fears were of his mission. Indeed, it is the most shameful transaction I have ever known of the kind."

Citizen Merlin de Douai, the same who gave Monroe the *accolade* a few months before, and four of his associates in the Committee of Public Safety, demanded a copy of the Treaty. Their letter (December 27, 1794) ran:

"We are informed, Citizen, that there was lately concluded at London a treaty of alliance and commerce between the British Government and Citizen Jay, Envoy Extraordinary of the United States.

"A vague report spreads itself abroad that in this Treaty the Citizen Jay has forgotten those things which our treaties with the American people, and the sacrifices which the French

[1] C. R. Fish: *American Diplomacy.* [2] Ibid.

people made to render them free, gave us a right to expect on the part of a Minister of a nation which we have so many motives to consider as friendly.

" It is important that we know positively in what light we are to hold this affair. There ought not to subsist between two free peoples the dissimulation which belongs to courts ; and it gives us pleasure to declare that we consider you as much opposed, personally, to that kind of policy as we are ourselves."

Monroe strove valiantly to soothe this disquietude and, in part, succeeded. But the truth is, he was unable to reassure himself, much less the suspicious Committee of Public Safety. Jay divulged nothing. He sent his Secretary, Colonel Trumbull, from London to Paris, who was to talk with Monroe in " strict confidence." To have invited Trumbull's communication would have put Monroe in a peculiar dilemma—a false position. He saw through the artifice, and refused to enter into a secret understanding with Colonel Trumbull. When Trumbull returned to London he found Gouverneur Morris there, and told him " that Mr. Monroe found it difficult to change principles fast enough to keep pace with the changes in the French Government." Naturally, the French looked askance at Trumbull. It seemed to them as though Jay and Monroe were up to mischief.[1]

John Spencer Bassett says that when the treaty came out " Monroe was so dumbfounded that he could only gasp. He did not try to set himself right, and thought himself lucky that the Ministry did not call upon him to explain his position." Pickering, who had just succeeded Randolph as Secretary of State, wished him to defend his Treaty. But Monroe preferred to let a sleeping dog lie. He pocketed his instructions, and he kept them pocketed for two months, at the same time keeping the French Government informed as to home politics and the opposition to the Washington administration ; so for some months all was well, the Directory refrained from " ungentle remonstrance."

But great was the anger of the French when they discovered the actual terms of Jay's Treaty, and were told that,

[1] George Morgan : *James Monroe.*

in spite of its unpopularity in America, it had received President Washington's signature.[1]

Instead of vindicating the status of neutrality laid down in the American treaties with France, it accepted a totally different status, permitting to England practices against which the United States had protested in the case of France. The English had just touched France to the quick by their second order for the seizure of provisions as contraband, and it was seen that they were justified by the new Treaty. Monroe was unable to meet the situation.

In February 1796 the Directory considered the alliance between France and the United States as ceasing to exist from the moment the Treaty was ratified, and intended to send a special envoy to the United States in order to express their extreme dissatisfaction. Monroe succeeded in changing their purpose, and elicited from M. de la Croix, the Foreign Minister, a summary, under three headings, of the French complaints, to which he sent an elaborate reply.

Thiers, in his history, remarks :

" In the French Government there were persons in favour of a rupture with the United States. Monroe, who was the ambassador, gave the Directory the most prudent advice on this occasion: ' War with France,' he said, ' will force the American Government to throw itself into the arms of England and to submit to her influence, aristocracy will gain supreme control in the United States, and liberty will be compromised. By patiently enduring, on the contrary, the wrongs of the present President, you will leave him without excuse, you will enlighten the Americans, and decide a contrary choice at the next election. All the wrongs of which France may have to complain will then be repaired.' "

The two countries had come to the verge of war. But the administration at home was angry with the envoy for not having endeavoured more strenuously to allay the apprehensions of France, and for failing to avert the impending danger.

During the progress of these events the new Secretary of State, Pickering, was in full correspondence with Monroe, having begun (Sept. 12, 1795) by acknowledging a series of letters, of which the first was nearly ten months old. Monroe

[1] The Treaty was ratified on August 18, 1795.

gained nothing by this change in the Department of State. Randolph's censures were mild in comparison with those which his successor bestowed on the unfortunate envoy. One of the severest of his letters is that of June 13, 1796, in which he complains that Monroe failed to make a suitable vindication of the United States Government at a time when the justice, the faith, and the honour of America were questioned, and the most important interests were at stake.

And then, just about this time, a French privateer captured an American vessel, the *Mount Vernon*, and gave a fillip to the Federal francophobes. Several members of Washington's Cabinet thought that a direct explanation should be demanded of France, and that "the recall of Mr. Monroe, by creating a vacancy, can alone authorize the sending of a new Minister to that country."

"Our duty," their letter went on, "obliges us to be explicit. Although the present Minister plenipotentiary of the United States at Paris has been amply furnished with documents to explain the views and conduct of the United States, yet his own letters authorize us to say that he has omitted to use them, and thereby exposed the United States to all the mischiefs which could flow from jealousies and erroneous conceptions of their views and conduct. Whether this dangerous omission arose from such an attachment to the cause of France as rendered him too little mindful of the interests of his own country, or from mistaken views of the latter, or from any other cause, the evil is the same."

The three members, Pickering, Wolcott and McHenry, thereupon advised Washington to recall Monroe and send in his place Patrick Henry, John Marshall, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, or William Smith of South Carolina. The three cabinet officers perhaps went a little out of their way in a parting thrust at Monroe. Certain anonymous letters from France directed against the administration had appeared in the American newspapers. The ministerial trio told Washington:

"We know that Major Montflorence was the writer and that he was the Chancellor of the Consul [at Paris], Skipwith, and from the connection of Mr. Monroe with these persons we can entertain no doubt that the anonymous letters were written with his privity."

Monroe vigorously denied the charge, and probably had nothing to do with the offending letters.

Meanwhile, and indeed throughout the later period of his mission, Monroe had his hands full of business. Many American vessels had been seized and condemned with their cargoes, and hundreds of American citizens were then in Paris and the seaports of France, many of them imprisoned, and all treated like enemies. This involved the American minister in weighty responsibilities, and employed his utmost energy. His effort to secure the release of Thomas Paine from imprisonment was another transaction to which frequent reference was made in subsequent days both by friends and opponents.

"Mr. Paine," he wrote, Sept. 15, 1795, "has lived in my house for about ten months past. He was, upon my arrival, confined in the Luxembourg, and released on my application; after which, being sick, he has remained with me. . . . The symptoms have become worse, and the prospect now is that he will not be able to hold out more than a month or two at the farthest. I shall certainly pay the utmost attention to this gentleman, as he is one of those whose merits in our Revolution were most distinguished."

The Minister called in the famous surgeon Dessault, who cured Paine of an abscess in his side, so that, far from dying in a month or two, he lived for another dozen years. Early in 1796 the Monroes removed to "The Pavilion," in the rue Clichy, where Paine continued with them, having become an important, though unofficial, attaché of the Legation.[1]

Sharing the fortunes and the social duties of the Minister were his beautiful wife (formerly Miss Kortright) and their daughter Eliza, a child of only seven on her arrival. The latter became a pupil of Marie Antoinette's friend and companion Madame de Campan, who kept a select school at St. Germain. Madame herself was a sister of Edmund Genêt, French Minister to America, and amongst her pupils a few years later were Hortense and Emilie de Beauharnais and Pauline and Caroline Bonaparte. With Hortense, Eliza

[1] "The Pavilion" was afterwards turned into the famous Tivoli Gardens. The site is in part built over and in part occupied by the rues de Bruxelles and Vintimille.

Monroe became very intimate and subsequently they corresponded frequently. In course of time she named her own daughter Hortense.

"Madame Campan," relates her biographer, "used in her old age to tell an anecdote of how, when walking in the beautiful forest of St. Germain with Minister Monroe and his little daughter Eliza, in those days when France seemed drifting hither and hither at the mercy of any strange adventurer, the future President remarked, 'Fortune lies in the gutter; anybody who takes the trouble to bend down can pick it up.' He then went to say how much finer a country America was than France, whereupon little Eliza burst in with, 'Yes, papa, but we haven't any roads like this,' pointing to the fine smooth road bordered with magnificent trees along which they were then walking. 'That's true,' replied Mr. Monroe, 'our country may be likened to a new house; we lack many things, but we possess the most precious of all—liberty.'"[1]

A young Corsican general just then in Paris might have given the Minister a more moderate appraisement of the value of the boon in question when administered in large quantities by the doctrinaires.

Mrs. Monroe entered with zest into the social, artistic and literary life of Paris and made many friends there. She sat for her portrait to the famous miniaturist Semé, and the result was justly admired.

"During all his exciting residence in Paris," says Mr. Gillman, "it is interesting to trace the minute interest maintained by Monroe in whatever pertained to his domestic affairs. There are long letters in the Gouverneur collection devoted to his financial business, to the welfare of his brothers, Andrew and Joseph, and of his sister, to his land bought near Monticello, his servants, fruit-trees, etc., besides many a passage in regard to his nephew Joseph, who was at school at St. Germain, and young Rutledge, likewise placed under the envoy's paternal care. His interest in the progress of these American boys in their French school betrays an unvarying kindness of heart in the midst of pressing anxieties and cares."

[1] V. M. Montagu: *The Celebrated Madame Campan.*

Monroe's recall as Minister was dated Aug. 22, 1796. Mentioning this fact in a letter to a friend, he intimated that the letter was probably kept back to prevent his arrival before the November elections in America. "I shall decline a winter passage, and therefore most probably shall not embark till April or May." But he only felt obliged to pass the early part of another winter in Paris, and in December he and his household, which at this time consisted of fourteen persons, were packed up and ready to depart.

Monroe had been treated with coolness by the French Government for some time before his recall, though civilities were renewed when his return to America was near at hand. He waited to greet his successor, Pinckney, and then took leave of the French Government on December 30, sailing from France by the Dublin packet. Even then he was not free from unpleasantness. A British frigate stopped and searched the packet from stem to stern, even invading Mrs. Monroe's cabin.

They were looking for the late Minister's friend, Paine, who had applied for a passport to leave France. But the search proved fruitless, save that it increased the natural resentment against British arrogance, already implanted in the bosom of the future President.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Monroe became Governor of Virginia in 1799 and after acting as an additional plenipotentiary in Paris in 1803, he was sent as Minister, first to England and later to Spain, but was unsuccessful as a negotiator. In 1811 he was chosen Secretary of State by Madison, and held this office until his election as President in 1816. He died July 4, 1831, at the age of seventy-three.

NOTE TO CHAPTER IV

After Monroe's departure Paine in Paris was busily engaged in explaining the true cause of Monroe's recall. He said that the late Minister "would not suffer that a Government [i.e. President Washington's] sold to the enemies of freedom, should discharge upon him its shame, its crime, its ingratitude and all the odium of its unjust dealings." According to Paine's biographer, Moncure D. Conway, "Monroe, like

Edmund Randolph and Thomas Paine, was sacrificed to the new commercial alliance with Great Britain."

"Monroe," says Bassett, "welcomed his removal. He had felt for more than a year that Hamilton and the politicians behind the Cabinet policies had used him as a pawn to keep France quiet while the Jay Treaty was going through the formative processes. He declared that if he were recalled he would '. . . show the whole affair to the public.'" He kept his word in a volume of five hundred pages. Of this production Oliver Wolcott wrote to Washington that it was a wicked misrepresentation of facts; that the author's conduct was detested by all *good* men, though he was sorry to say that many applauded it. Harper of South Carolina denounced it in Congress in this wise:

"In this book is to be found the most complete justification of the Executive for his recall, in every respect except that it was so long delayed; for the book contains the most singular display of incapacity, unfaithfulness and presumption, of neglect of orders, forgetfulness of the dignity, rights and interests of his own country, and servile devotedness to the Government of the country to which he was sent, that can be found in the history of diplomacy."

It was hardly all that; but the results of Monroe's indiscretion and partisanship were soon to be revealed.

CHAPTER V

PINCKNEY AND ROBERT LIVINGSTON (1796–1804)

CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY of South Carolina, who had been appointed Monroe's successor, reached Paris early in December 1796, a few weeks before the late Minister's departure.

Pinckney was then aged fifty: he was the son of the Chief Justice of his State, and had been educated in England, at Oxford and the Middle Temple. In his youth he had been one of Washington's aides-de-camp and had retired from the revolutionary war with the rank of brigadier-general.

When he reached Paris, although Monroe's reception of him was cordial enough and he was duly presented by him to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Pinckney found the impression widely prevailing was that he was an aristocrat and one of Washington's satellites. On this account a considerable social and official coldness was manifested.

It soon appeared that Monroe's conduct, after he had become aware of the details of Jay's Treaty, had been anything but proper. It was bad enough to come under the influence of Paine. He had entered into intimate relations with the French republican leaders and had explained to them his own American party views. While admitting that the existing Government was hostile to France, he said that there was a difference between the American Government and the American people. They had only to wait until the next presidential election, which would return Jefferson to power, and then America's attitude would be all they could desire. Thus, that national solidarity which Washington had so ardently striven to exhibit to Europe was undermined and Pinckney made to appear as the simple emissary of a political party, the Federalists, which had unwisely recalled such a friend of France as Citizen Monroe.

The result might have been foreseen. The Directory

flatly refused to receive the Federalist aristocrat, Pinckney, and on February 3, 1797, went so far as to order him to leave the country. Their resentment took other forms.

"They suspended the operations existing between the United States and France; they issued orders to seize all American vessels bound to British ports or having property of their enemies on board; their diplomatic correspondence exhibited a series of measures alike injurious and insulting to the American Government."

They had already recalled their Minister, Adet, from the United States, although allowing him to remain in the hope that he might influence the elections. Adet had had the effrontery to send a letter to the press, explaining his withdrawal not as a rupture between France and the United States, but "as a mark of just discontent, which was to last until the Government of the United States returned to sentiments and to measures more conformable to the interests of the alliance, and to the sworn friendship between the two nations."

Hopeful of tiding over difficulties, the rejected minister, Pinckney, expressed a wish to remain in Paris until he could receive instructions from home. But even this was denied him by the offended Directory, and he was peremptorily threatened with arrest. In the end, he obtained his passports and retired to London.

All these proceedings were a little too much for John Adams, who had succeeded Washington as President, and one of his first acts was to summon an extra session of Congress in May 1797, to whom he declared that France was treating the United States "neither as allies nor as friends, nor as a sovereign State." It was a crisis. America would try further negotiations, but meanwhile she would put herself in a state of defence.

Two months later (July 15, 1797), Talleyrand reappeared in the French political arena as Minister for Foreign Affairs. He had recently returned from banishment in America, and had read before the Institute papers on "The Commercial Relations of the United States" and "The Colonial Interests of France." Although at first occupied

with young General Napoleon Bonaparte's plan to divert attention to Egypt and the East, he had another vast project simmering in his brain. Briefly, his opinion was that the American seaboard was irrevocably bound to England by language, habits and trade, but that the territory beyond the mountains would eventually secede and need French support. Indeed, two years before, in February 1795, the French envoy, Fauchet, had advised that the only way of off-setting the effects of the Jay Treaty, whose details were then only suspected, was the acquisition by France of Louisiana. When therefore his hands were free, Talleyrand proceeded to carry out his scheme to reacquire from Spain the region south of Natchez and west of the Mississippi. He later sent Citizen Guillemardet as Minister to Madrid (May 1798), with instructions to obtain the retrocession of Louisiana and Florida to France.

The American Government had as yet only heard rumours of these French designs on their western borders; but the official treatment of Pinckney was insulting, and the constant seizure and condemnation of American vessels under successive decrees unjustifiable and insupportable. As Monroe, a Republican, and Pinckney, a Federalist, had both failed in Paris, President Adams decided upon a joint commission of three—with Pinckney would be joined John Marshall, a Federalist, and Elbridge Gerry, a Republican. The trio received their instructions on the very day on which Talleyrand took office.

When the three commissioners arrived in Paris they found themselves confronting a situation

"unparalleled since the last century of the Roman republic. Triumphant France was surrounded by nations buying peace; the dazzling private expenditure which betokened the coming empire tempted public officials to demand *douceurs* for the favour of their nod. The world seemed melting into new shapes at the whim of those who from moment to moment dominated Paris. America was a minor consideration; she was treated as were other Powers. Even the astute Talleyrand, master of finesse, could see the need of no more subtile weapon than the threat, to be parried by the bribe."[1]

[1] Fish: *American Diplomacy.*

Talleyrand declined to receive the commissioners until redress of grievances was made and the President's message of May 16, 1797, dealing with the French situation, explained away.

This did not prevent the astute minister from introducing the commissioners to certain individuals in his confidence. These persons, whose names were not given, their identities being concealed under the letters X, Y and Z, explained that, as an essential preliminary to negotiation, France expected the United States to show their sense of their past misconduct by buying from her, at par, certain Dutch bonds worth about fifty cents on the dollar. It was a well-known expedient for exacting tribute, and ought to have shocked no one. Two satellite republics, America and Holland, were to combine to feed a great one, France. A *douceur* of a million francs, it was hinted, would be welcomed in the right official quarter.[1] The American commissioners were properly shocked and Pinckney is stated to have uttered those words which will be found in every American history-book: "Millions for defence, but not one cent for tribute!" He and Marshall at once broke off negotiations. Gerry, the Republican, lingered for three months longer, but without being "trapped into any concessions" by Talleyrand. He then also left France in August 1798.

When the commissioners' despatches reached President Adams in America, he declared (March 19, 1799) that they made peace with France no longer possible. The following month the X.Y.Z. correspondence was published and a large majority of Americans were ready to back up the action of the President. Congress authorized an increase in Army and Navy, and on June 21 Adams declared that he would "never send another Minister to France without assurances that he will be received, respected and honoured as the

[1] "This proposal was not likely to surprise a trained diplomat at that time, as now, if indeed anything in the Paris of 1798 could have surprised a trained diplomat. It was, in effect, a renewal in a different form of the loan proposition of 1794 so warmly endorsed by Monroe. We had not hesitated to buy peace from the Barbary pirates, and there was really no need of being more scrupulous about corrupting Talleyrand's morals than theirs. Pitt himself was this very time considering the purchase of peace on similar, but dearer, terms."—C. R. Fish: *American Diplomacy*. This writer quotes Pinckney's phrase as simply, "No, no, no! Not a sixpence!"

representative of a great, free, powerful and independent nation."

Now ensued a singular situation. Peace was at an end, but war was not declared. All commercial intercourse with France was suspended. Merchant vessels were authorized to arm and to defend themselves against search, seizure or interference by French vessels. A fortnight later Franco-American treaties were also suspended and on July 8 authority was given to naval vessels to capture armed French ships committing depredations on American commerce and empowered privateers to do the same. As virtually all French merchantmen were armed, this licence offered a wide field for hostile adventure. Three hundred and sixty-five privateers received commissions, and in the end several naval duels were fought, and altogether France lost ninety ships.

This curious state of Franco-American relations involved the abandonment by America of her neutrality in the European struggle; it also threatened to divide dangerously domestic public opinion. The anti-war party was very strong. One Dr. Logan, a Philadelphia Quaker, had come to France in 1798 with letters from Jefferson and Chief Justice McKean of Pennsylvania to see if he could not arrange a peace privately with the Directory, a diplomatic *démarche* which Washington roundly condemmed.

Talleyrand had really not intended war with America; it would be playing England's game. What he had wanted was America's money, though it must be confessed he had gone about it clumsily. When he saw the failure of the X.Y.Z. plan he realized that it was time to make a move towards the resumption of friendly relations.

On September 28, 1798, therefore, he informed William Vans Murray, the American Minister at the Hague, that any Minister whom the United States might send would be received with the respect due to the "representative of a free, independent and powerful nation." This letter was at once accepted by Adams, himself now totally against war, as complying with the conditions laid down in his message of June 21. The late attitude towards France had been necessary, he said, in order to assert American national honour and prestige. Welcoming a return to neutrality and diplomatic

isolation, the President (February 18, 1799) nominated Murray as Minister to France.

A few days later he changed his mind and substituted for a single Minister another Commission, comprising, in addition to Murray, the Chief Justice, Oliver Ellsworth, and Patrick Henry. Upon the latter's refusal, Governor Davie of North Carolina was substituted. Concerning the instructions to the Commission, Pinckney wrote to Rufus King, March 12, 1799:

"These terms are what we have a clear right to, and our interest and honour oblige us to insist on. Yet I very much doubt whether France will yield them. I am morally sure she will not; and this has put us all much at our ease."

Nevertheless, in Paris, the negotiations, having the goodwill of Talleyrand and of the rising young Bonaparte, progressed rapidly. On September 30, 1800, a Convention was concluded. This agreement was generally satisfactory on points relating to navigation.

The United States Senate amended the Convention by the provision that it should remain in force for eight years. Bonaparte, the First Consul, had the sagacity to accept this amendment, "provided that by this retrenchment the two States renounced the respective pretensions which are the object of the said article."

Thus were superseded the treaties negotiated by Franklin, which constituted America's first "entangling alliance." [1]

If Pinckney during this long interval still expected to be renamed as Minister to France he was disappointed. He was sent instead to Madrid, and Adams, the retiring President, nominated James Asheton Bayard of Delaware for the vacant mission. Bayard was "a handsome, florid, fashionably attired man of thirty-five, an aristocrat, with a lofty scorn of all things republican," who had a great liking for cards, statecraft and diplomatic deals.[2]

But Bayard (ancestor of a future Minister to England) was not destined to serve. In the month following his appointment Thomas Jefferson entered into presidential

[1] Fish: *American Diplomacy.*
[2] Beveridge: *Life of Marshall.*

power and almost his first act was to name his old friend, Robert R. Livingston of New York, as Minister to France.

Livingston sprang from one of the most notable families in America, the lords of Livingston Manor, a vast estate of one hundred and sixty thousand acres, on the Hudson. Several members of his family had distinguished themselves in the public service ; he himself had been Secretary of State and Chancellor of State of New York. He was approaching sixty, tall of person, wealthy, cultured and of gracious manners. His only social defect was an increasing deafness.

The new President naturally set about cultivating the friendship of both France and Spain. But such friendship involved circumspection. On May 26, 1801, Jefferson wrote to Monroe : " There is considerable reason to apprehend that Spain cedes Louisiana and the Floridas to France. It is a policy very unwise in both, and very ominous to us."

Livingston was therefore directed to report on any measure which threatened American interests in the West.

At first Livingston's own opinion was that " so long as France conforms to existing treaties " between the United States and Spain, we should not oppose the transfer of the Louisiana territory to her." Besides, there were grave difficulties in the paths of diplomacy in Paris. As he wrote to Madison, January 13, 1802 :

" There was never a Government where less could be done by negotiations than here. There are no people, no legislature, no counsellors. One man is everything. . . . He seldom asks advice and never hears it unasked. His Ministers are mere clerks, and his Legislature and counsellors parade officers."

At last the truth came out ; it was known that Spain had been bullied into giving back to France the vast territory which she had been awarded by the Treaty of 1763 as the price of her military and naval co-operation. Jefferson instantly shared the alarm of the American inhabitants of the Mississippi region.

" The cession of Louisiana and the Floridas by Spain to France," he wrote Livingston (April 18, 1802), " works most sorely on the United States." He continued :

[*Wide World Photos.*

ROBERT LIVINGSTON.

" On this subject the Secretary of State has written to you fully ; yet I cannot forbear recurring to it personally, so deep is the impression it makes on my mind. It completely reverses all the political relations of the United States, and will form a new epoch in our political course. . . . There is on the globe one single spot, the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans, through which the produce of three-eighths of our territory must pass to market, and from its fertility it will ere long yield more than half of our whole produce and contain more than half of our inhabitants. France, placing herself in that door, assumes to us the attitude of defiance. Spain might have retained it quietly for years. Her pacific disposition, her feeble state, would induce her to increase our facilities there, so that her possession of the place would hardly be felt by us, and it would not perhaps be very long before some circumstance might arise which might make the cession of it to us the price of something of more worth to her. Not so can it ever be in the hands of France. . . . The day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to retain her for ever within the low-water mark. It seals the union of two nations who, in conjunction, can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation."

This is strong and strange language, from such a pacifist and Anglophobe as Jefferson. One fears that Jefferson's opinions were not always consistent, for in spite of repeated menaces, we find him writing to Livingston in the following October that the French occupation of Louisiana was really " not important enough to risk a breach of peace."

There is no doubt Jefferson sincerely desired peace, but something definite had to be done. For about this very time the Spanish Intendant gave notice that New Orleans would shortly be closed to free navigation. Jefferson communicated this information to Congress when it assembled in December. It caused great excitement through the country, especially in the West. It became imperative to attempt some pacific arrangement to purchase if possible from France the outlet to the Gulf of Mexico. For this object Congress readily appropriated the sum of two million dollars ; and Jefferson was so anxious to clinch matters that he decided to send a

special Minister to act with Livingston in the negotiations in Paris.

Livingston he trusted; but Livingston was a long way off, and communication was tedious and uncertain. There was one man who knew his mind on every point—the man who had won the friendship of the French, who had been Minister to France, the friend also of Thomas Paine, and who had been recalled with ignominy by President Washington seven years before. That man was James Monroe; accordingly Jefferson sent Monroe.

On January 10, 1802, the Ex-Minister was again an Envoy Extraordinary to France. Three weeks later Jefferson wrote Livingston that he and Monroe were to "work diligently for the cession of New Orleans by France to the United States." There was then no idea in his mind that the whole Louisiana territory was in the market, only "a barren sand six hundred miles from east to west, and from thirty to forty and fifty miles to south, formed by the deposition of the sands by the Gulf Stream in its circular course round the Mexican Gulf," which commanded the navigation of the Mississippi.

Now, as was natural, Livingston by no means relished this special appointment of a coadjutor to perform a service that he was quite able to perform himself. And most of his friends were of his way of thinking. One of them, the ex-Minister, Gouverneur Morris, wrote to Livingston:

"It is possible I am unjust to Mr. Monroe, but I really consider him a person of mediocrity in every respect. Just exceptions lie against his diplomatic character, and, taking all circumstances into consideration, his appointment must appear extraordinary to the Cabinets of Europe. . . . The pretext that he is only joined with you in the commission is mere pretext, and every discreet man with you will naturally consider him as the principal and the chief, and, in fact, the sole Minister."

This was calculated to make Livingston eager to settle the Louisiana business before Monroe's arrival. And at that very moment events were happening in France and to Bonaparte's plans to make American overtures successful. The First Consul had decided on provoking a fresh war with

England.[1] He was now ready to abandon his schemes of dominion in the West Indies and on the mainland. St. Domingo had proved a terrible disaster for the French arms, his brother-in-law General Leclerc had perished and the whole campaign was grossly mismanaged.

If war came Louisiana would only be a drag on France: hence Napoleon made up his mind to abandon Louisiana *in toto*.

It so happened that the very day this momentous decision was reached Monroe, Livingston's destined colleague, came in sight of the coast of France. Such despatch was used that it looked as if the business would be settled before his arrival. On April 7 the First Consul had opened his mind to Talleyrand with regard to ceding Louisiana to the United States. Three days later (Easter Sunday) Bonaparte, after the religious ceremonies of the day at St. Cloud, called to him two of his Ministers, of whom Barbé de Marbois was one. He wished, he said, to explain his intention of selling Louisiana to the United States. He began by expressing the fear that England would seize Louisiana as her first act of war.

"I think of ceding it to the United States. I can scarcely say that I cede it to them, for it is not yet in our possession. If, however, I leave the least time to our enemies, I shall only transmit an empty title to those republicans whose friendship I seek. They ask me only one town in Louisiana; but I already consider the colony as entirely lost; and it appears to me that in the hands of this growing power it will be more useful to the policy, and even to the commerce of France, than if I should attempt to keep it."[2]

Although Marbois agreed, his colleague demurred, and the discussion was prolonged into the night. Next morning, at daybreak, Napoleon summoned Marbois and said:

"Irresolution and deliberation are no longer in season. I renounce Louisiana. It is not only New Orleans that I

[1] On March 12 Talleyrand, at Madame Bonaparte's drawing-room, heard Napoleon say to Lord Whitworth, the British Minister: "I find, Milord, that your nation wants war again." "No, Sir," replied his lordship, "we are desirous of peace." "I must either have Malta or war," said Napoleon. Whitworth repeated the words to Livingston, who at once wrote Madison.

[2] H. Adams, *History of the United States*; Barbé de Marbois, *Louisiana*.

cede; it is the whole colony, without reserve. I know the price of what I abandon. . . . I renounce it with the greatest regret; to attempt obstinately to retain it would be folly. I direct you to negotiate the affair. Have an interview this very day with Mr. Livingston. I want fifty million francs; for less I will not treat. Acquaint me day by day, hour by hour, with your progress. Keep Talleyrand informed."

Armed with these instructions, Marbois sought Livingston. The price to be paid was the major point at issue. This happened on the Monday. On the previous day Livingston had heard of Monroe's arrival at Havre, and sent him the following letter of welcome:

"*April* 10, 1803.

"I congratulate you on your safe arrival. We have long and anxiously waited for you. God grant that your mission may answer your and the public expectation. War may do something for us; nothing else would. I have paved the way for you, and if you could add to my memoirs an assurance that we were now in possession of New Orleans we should do well; but I detain Mr. Bentalou, who is impatient to fly to the arms of his wife. I have apprised the Minister of your arrival, and told him you would be here on Tuesday or Wednesday."

At the interview on Monday with Talleyrand "he asked me," reported Livingston, "whether we wished to have the whole of Louisiana. I told him no." Livingston added that it would be better if France should give up the territory north of the Arkansas, so that she could have a barrier against Canada. Talleyrand wanted to know what America would give for the whole. Livingston named 20,000,000 francs as a possible sum. But Monroe, he added, would soon be in Paris. Talleyrand told him to think over the proposal himself. "The next day, Tuesday, April 12," says Henry Adams, "Livingston, partly recovered from his surprise, hung about Talleyrand persistently, for his chance of reaping alone the fruit of his labours, vanished with every minute that passed."

The second American Envoy Extraordinary, Monroe, reached St. Germain late Monday night. At one o'clock on

Tuesday afternoon he descended from his post-chaise at his Paris hotel.

It was with astonishment that Monroe heard from Livingston of the readiness of the French to sell the whole Louisiana territory. The two envoys proceeded to discuss the highest price which they could venture to promise. While Monroe was taking his first dinner with Livingston, in company with their secretaries, Marbois appeared in the garden and presently joined the party. Before leaving he led Livingston into a free conference upon the cession, and invited him to continue to talk at a later hour after the company had dispersed. Livingston alone repaired to the house of Marbois and remained till midnight. At this interview the whole country of Louisiana was offered to the United States for 100,000,000 francs, plus payment of the claims of Americans against France. Livingston pronounced this an exorbitant figure, for he said claims amounted to about 20,000,000 francs. He told Marbois that his Government did not want the region to the west of the Mississippi. Marbois thereupon reduced his figure to 60,000,000 francs, plus 20,000,000 for the claims.

"I told him," said Livingston, "that it was vain to ask anything that was so greatly beyond our means; that true policy would dictate to the First Consul not to press such a demand; that he must know it would render the present Government unpopular. . . . I told him that I would consult Mr. Monroe, but that neither he nor I could accede to his ideas on the subject."

Livingston sat up until three hours after midnight writing a despatch to Madison, narrating the interview with Marbois, and saying that he was convinced the purchase was wise. He also made a suggestion (which sounds odd to us nowadays), that if the price was too high, the outlay might be reimbursed by the "sale of the territory west of the Mississippi, with the right of sovereignty, to some Power in Europe, whose vicinity we should not fear."

"I have in my former letter informed you of M. Talleyrand's calling upon me, previous to the arrival of Mr. Monroe, for a proposition for the whole of Louisiana; of his afterwards

trifling with me, and telling me *that what he said was unauthorized.* This circumstance, for which I have accounted to you in one of my letters, led me to think, though it afterwards appeared without reason, that some change had taken place in the determination which I knew the Consul had before taken to sell. I had just then received a line from Monroe, informing me of his arrival. I wrote to him a hasty answer, under the influence of ideas excited by these prevarications of the Minister, expressing the hope that he had brought information that New Orleans was in our possession; that I hoped our negotiation might be successful; but that, while I feared nothing but war would avail us anything, I had paved the way for him.[1]

It is hardly surprising that Livingston, from first to last, was never "quite at ease in respect to Monroe." He could not help feeling chagrin in not being allowed to conclude, without the support of a fresh colleague, the negotiation he had undertaken, and in his reports to Madison was careful not to yield any of his own diplomatic prerogatives or to conceal his own services.

In this attitude he had, as we shall see, the full sympathy of Napoleon and the French administrators.

Monroe, for his part, privately wrote to Madison (April 13, 1803):

"I was informed on my arrival here by Mr. Skipwith[2] that Mr. Livingston, mortified at my appointment, had done everything in his power to turn the occurrences in America, and even my mission, to his account by pressing the Government on every point with a view to show that he had accomplished what was wished without my aid."

It is highly probable that Talleyrand had his own personal reasons for preferring to deal with Livingston; at any rate, he delayed the presentation of Monroe to Bonaparte until May 1, and even then failed to be present himself as Foreign Minister, leaving to Livingston the ceremonious duty of naming his colleague.

On April 17 Bonaparte made an official announcement to the Pope and others that, in consequence of England's viola-

[1] Livingston to Madison.

[2] American Consul in Paris.

tion of the Peace of Amiens, France was involved in war with her.

The Louisiana negotiations continued incessantly. On April 28 Marbois, Livingston and Monroe had a conference and after a good deal of bickering the Americans, with a burst of courage, took it upon themselves to agree to the French terms of 80,000,000 francs ($15,000,000). Part of this sum, $3,750,000, was to go to the American creditors of France, and was to be paid to them by the United States Government. On April 30 Napoleon approved of the arrangement, although he scolded Marbois in the matter of the claims. It was "wasting money" he said, cynically, to pay them.

Thus, the great deed—the "biggest real estate transaction in history" as it has been called—was accomplished. As to the rival diplomatic claims of the two American envoys, over which so much ink has been spilt, it need only be said the occasion called for the display of no very great powers of diplomacy. Napoleon was determined to get rid of Louisiana. "Diplomatically," observes Channing of Livingston and Monroe, "they had achieved nothing. Louisiana had been thrown into their hands through no effort of theirs." Nevertheless, as negotiations had to be conducted, it is clear throughout the whole procedure that Napoleon, Talleyrand and Marbois preferred that it should be conducted by the duly accredited Minister Livingston, whom they knew and liked, rather than by Monroe, whom they regarded as an interloper of Jacobin antecedents.

At any rate, not until the transaction was settled was the Minister Extraordinary, Monroe, presented to the First Consul. He accompanied Livingston to the Louvre on May 1 and in his own naïve account of the interview may be read Napoleon's rather contemptuous attitude towards his diplomatic intrusion:

"When the Consul came around to me, Mr. Livingston presented me to him, on which the Consul observed that he was glad to see me. '*Je suis bien aise de vous voir.* You have been here fifteen days?' 'Yes.' 'You had a good voyage?' 'Yes.' 'You came in a frigate?' 'No; in a merchant vessel charged for the purpose.' Colonel Mercer

was presented. Says he: '*He is the Secretary of the Legation?*'[1] 'No, but my friend.' He then made inquiries of Mr. Livingston and his Secretary, how their families were, and then turned to Mr. Livingston and myself and observed that our affairs should be settled."

The formal signatures to the Treaty and Convention were affixed several days later, although antedated April 30. Upon that occasion Livingston declared to his colleagues:

"We have lived long, but this is the noblest work of our whole lives. The Treaty we have just signed had not been obtained by art or dictated by force; equally advantageous to the two contracting parties, it will change vast solitudes into flourishing districts. From this day the United States will take their place among the Powers of the first rank; the English lose all the exclusive influence in the affairs of America."

There were then only a few to perceive and point out the awkward truth that Napoleon, in thus acting for France, had handed over what was not theirs, and which France had no right to sell, having solemnly promised the Spaniards not to alienate the territory.

"In taking Louisiana," comments a recent American historian, "we were the accomplices of the greatest highwayman in modern history, and the goods which we received were those which he compelled his unwilling victim to disgorge."[2]

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

On his return from France Pinckney was appointed a major-general in the American Army, war being thought imminent. He became Federalist candidate for the Vice-Presidency in 1800, and for President in 1804 and 1808, but was unsuccessful. He died in 1827.

[1] Napoleon well knew that Harris was Secretary of the American Legation, but it was his way of reminding Monroe of his anomalous diplomatic position.

[2] Channing: *The Jeffersonian System.*

CHAPTER VI

ARMSTRONG (1804–10)

When Livingston's failing health and chronic deafness, coupled with the feeling that he had now accomplished all that he was ever likely to do at the Court of the new Emperor (for in March 1804 the Consulate gave way to an Empire), prompted him to apply for a recall, he ventured to suggest to Monroe and the President the name of a suitable successor.[1] It was that of his brother-in-law, General John Armstrong, who was then Secretary of State for Pennsylvania, and a man of considerable private means. Jefferson felt that he owed Livingston that favour, and Armstrong was accordingly appointed.

The new Minister was then barely forty-six. A Pennsylvanian, he had been Attorney-General of that State, but on marrying Livingston's sister had removed to New York and in 1800 was chosen Senator from that State. He had won a captaincy in the Revolutionary War, but as was then—and perhaps occasionally since—the custom, his rank had been progressively advanced by his friends to match his political fortunes. So that when he presented himself in Paris he was already known as General Armstrong, although the formal conferment of that title does not figure in the records until he came to offer his military services to President Madison in 1812. He was a pleasant-mannered, somewhat ineffectual gentleman, who found himself, owing to international relations at that period with France, almost as much alone in the diplomatic corps in the French capital as Morris had been. Grave matters were to arise and again embitter France and the United States during the next decade—and indeed for two decades thereafter, but as long as Napoleon was in power he was generally impervious to

[1] Robert Livingston survived until 1813.

any diplomatic argument, protest or appeal, and imposed his will heedless of the rights of a neutral nation three or four thousand miles away.

Armstrong arrived in Paris at the moment when Napoleon was busy in the north planning a descent upon England, with a new kingdom of Italy and a great war with Austria already on the horizon. As far as America was concerned, his Imperial Majesty appeared to have washed his hands of her except in so far as more dollars might be wrung out over the affair of the Florida boundary. For although Louisiana had passed into the ownership of the United States there still remained the question of Florida to vex Spanish-American and, in a measure, Franco-American relations.

Of Louisiana Talleyrand had said to Livingston, "You have made a noble bargain, and I suppose you will make the most of it." On one side Florida blocked the way. Napoleon might easily have settled the boundary question by freely exhibiting the French records to the American Minister. But he preferred mystery and confusion; and during the whole period of Armstrong's mission the Florida question became "a barometer of European conditions."[1] Every time the general pressure grew strong Napoleon was prepared to delimit the frontier for a cash consideration. Armstrong certainly grasped the situation from the first when he wrote Madison (December 24, 1804):

"This country has determined to convert the negotiation into a job and to draw from it advantage merely pecuniary to itself."

American vision was sweeping the entire broad horizon to the South, and Madison himself wrote: "We begin to broach the idea that we consider the whole Gulf Stream as our waters." But nearly a decade before this Fauchet had reported to the Directory: "America puffs itself up with its position and the future power to which it can pretend."

Certain portions of Spanish America had long been contemplated as desirable, such as the Floridas, Texas and

[1] Fish: *American Diplomacy.*

Cuba, and the advisability of asserting America's reversionary interest in the Floridas was canvassed. From the year 1808 this interest was ripe for assertion in respect to Cuba. When there were fears that that island might fall either to France or to England, Jefferson wrote to Gallatin (May 17, 1808): "I shall sincerely lament Cuba's falling into any hands but those of its present owners. Spanish America is at present in the best hands for us, and '*Chi sta bene, non si muove*' should be our motto." In April 1799 he told Madison that Napoleon might let the United States have Cuba "to prevent our aid to Mexico and the other provinces. That would be a price," he added, "and I would immediately ereet a column on the southernmost limit of Cuba, and inscribe on it a *ne plus ultra* as to us in that direction. . . . Cuba can be defended by us without a navy, and this develops the principle which ought to limit our views."

At all events, it was clear that America could not with equanimity see Cuba taken by either France or England. On the other hand, there was a risk of that island, indeed Texas, and perhaps California, escaping from the rule of Spain only in order to assume an independence which could not, however embarrassing, be violated. The situation had to be closely watched, and Armstrong, in addition to his Paris post, had also been constituted titular American Minister to Spain.

The defence of American interests in Continental Europe was already quite enough to engross Armstrong's attention. A state of war between France and Great Britain had existed since May 16, 1803, although actual hostilities did not occur until nearly two years later. After the battle of Trafalgar had wrecked Napoleon's scheme of invasion and his other naval projects, he determined upon inflicting a crushing blow upon England by closing the ports of Europe to English and colonial merchandise. When Prussia stood in the way he smashed Prussia in a series of victories, and on November 21, 1806, issued from Berlin the famous series of decrees proclaiming the British Isles to be in a state of blockade and prohibiting all commerce and correspondence with them. England retaliated with her Orders in Council (January 7, 1807) under which all neutral vessels were prohibited from

trading between ports of France and her allies. Napoleon countered with the Milan Decrees of December 1807 and January 11, 1808, which proclaimed that any vessel which was in any way connected with British trade or which should submit to search by British commanders became thereby " denationalized and a good prize for the vessels of France and her allies." So, thereafter, neutral countries, but principally America, found themselves caught disastrously between the two chief combatants. American ships were stopped, searched and seized by the warships of both countries. It was not long before the situation became intolerable and Jefferson's protests took shape in a decree of non-intercourse with Europe.

England had placed France in a state of blockade. Napoleon, by his decree of Berlin, had declared the Britannic Isles likewise blockaded. The first measure kept neutral vessels at a distance from France, the second interdicted them England.

Things became worse, and on April 22, 1808, Napoleon in his Bayonne Decree made a sweeping stroke at all American vessels on the high seas. Armstrong thereupon wrote to the Secretary of State (April 23, 1808):

" Orders were given on the 17th instant, and received yesterday at the imperial custom-house here, ' to seize all American vessels now in the ports of France, or which may come into them hereafter.' "

Two days later he added :

" I have this moment received the following explanation of the above-mentioned order, viz. : That it directs the seizure of vessels coming into ports of France after its own date, because no vessel of the United States can now navigate the seas without infracting a law of the said States, and thus furnishing a presumption that they do so on British account or in British connection."

Madison wrote to the American Minister in Paris (July 22) :

" If France does not wish to throw the United States into war against her, for which it is impossible to find a rational or plausible inducement, she ought not to hesitate a moment

in revoking at least so much of her decrees as violate the rights of the sea, and furnish to her adversary the pretext for his retaliatary measures. It would seem as if the imperial cabinet had never paid sufficient attention to the smallness of the sacrifice which a repeal of that portion of its system would involve, if an act of justice is to be called sacrifice.

"There is much reason to believe that if the British Government should not concur in a mutual abolition of the orders and of the embargo, it will result from an unwillingness to set an example which might be followed and might consequently put an end to the irritating career of her enemy, on which the calculation is built. Might not use be made of this view of the matter in those frank and friendly conversations which sometimes best admit topics of a delicate nature, without descending from the necessary level? In every view it is evidently proper, as far as respect to the national honour will allow, to avoid a style of procedure which might co-operate with the policy of the British Government, by stimulating the passions of the French."

Armstrong told the French Foreign Minister, Talleyrand's successor, Champagny (afterwards Duc de Cadore), that Napoleon had, of course, a right to make such municipal regulations as he might deem proper with regard to foreign commerce; he might forbid the entry into ports of France of American ships which have touched in England or been destined to England, and he might either sequester or confiscate such vessels of the United States as should infract these laws, after due promulgation and notice thereof; but beyond this the United States hoped and believed that his Majesty would not go.[1]

But the American envoy must long since have realized that Napoleon knew no limits when his interest was concerned. A year later (August 4, 1809), when the American non-intercourse policy had further aggravated Anglo-American relations, the battle of Wagram granted the Emperor full sway over Europe. He now drafted the Decree of Vienna, ordering the seizure and confiscation of "every American ship which shall enter the ports of France, Spain or Italy."

When this order had been obeyed he held in his hands over

[1] Armstrong to Champagny, August 6, 1808.

eight million dollars' worth of American property. The number of vessels seized in the various countries indicated the state of trade: fifty-one in France, forty-four in Spain, twenty-eight in Naples and eleven in Holland.

At the close of the year the alarmed and outraged Washington Government requested Armstrong to enquire of the Duc de Cadore what were the conditions on which his Majesty the Emperor would annul his decree, commonly called the Berlin Decree, and whether, if Great Britain revoked her blockades of a date anterior to that decree, his Majesty would consent to revoke the said decree?

Cadore's answer to Armstrong's note (January 25, 1810) ran:

"The only condition required for the revocation, by his Majesty the Emperor, of the decree of Berlin, will be previous revocation by the British Government of her blockades of France, or part of France (such as that from the Elbe to Brest, etc.) of a date anterior to that of the aforesaid decree."

If the British persisted, neutrals must continue to suffer. As if to enforce the moral, on March 23 the Emperor issued a further decree from Rambouillet condemning the American ships in French and allied ports to be sold.

Congress was now driven to take action. A bill was passed that if either belligerent withdrew its decrees before March 3, 1811, and the other should fail to do so within three months the President would restore the non-intercourse act against the delinquent, whether that delinquent were France or England. This seemed to Napoleon a capital chance to embroil England and America in war, and so, on August 5, 1810, he directed Cadore to write to Armstrong:

"In this state of things, I am authorized to declare to you, sir, that the decrees of Berlin and Milan are revoked, and that after the 1st of November they will cease to have effect; it being understood that, in consequence of this declaration, the English shall revoke their Orders in Council, and renounce the new principles of blockade which they have wished to establish; or that the United States, conformably to the act you have just communicated, shall cause their rights to be respected by the English. It is with the most particular satis-

faction, sir, that I make known to you this determination of the Emperor. His Majesty loves the Americans. Their prosperity and their commerce are within the scope of his policy."

Only, be it well noted—for enormous damage and suffering were to result from this calculated duplicity—Cadore thus *declared* the decrees were revoked ; but not to France, America or Britain did he vouchsafe a glimpse of the actual revoking order. No wonder, therefore, that its existence was doubted.

In a further communication Cadore wrote :

" His Majesty has always wished to favour the commerce of the United States. It was not without reluctance that he used reprisal towards the Americans but he saw that Congress had ordered the confiscation of all French vessels which might arrive in the United States.

" It appears that Congress might have spared his Majesty and his subjects this mortification [ce désagrément] if in place of that harsh and decisive measure, which left to France no choice, they had used some palliative, such as that of not receiving French vessels, or of sending them away, after a delay of so many days.

" As soon as his Majesty was informed of this hostile act, he felt that the honour of France, involved in this point, could not be cleansed [ne pouvait être lavé] but by a declaration of war, preceded, however, by tedious explanations.

" The Emperor contented himself with making reprisals ; and, in consequence, he applied to American vessels which came to France, or to the countries occupied by the French armies, word for word, the regulations of the Act of Congress.

" Since the last measures, by which that hostile act is repealed, his Majesty hastens to cause it to be made known to you that he anticipates that which may re-establish harmony with the United States, and that he repeals his decrees of Berlin and Milan, under the conditions pointed out in my letter to you of the 5th of August.

" During this interval, the American vessels which shall arrive in France will not be subjected to confiscation : because the act of Congress, which had served as a motive to our reprisals, is repealed ; but these vessels will be subjected to all the effects of the Berlin and Milan decrees ; that is to say,

they will be treated *amicably*, if they can be considered as Americans, and *hostilely*, if they have lost their national character [s'ils se sont laissé dénationalisé] by submitting to the Order in Council of the British Government."

This was all very well, but Napoleon had really not the smallest intention of abandoning his system. "It is evident," he said bluntly, "that we commit ourselves to nothing." Should the English credulously withdraw their orders, he could still achieve the results he aimed at by customs regulations.

But the British Government refused to be duped, and in France the French prize courts, as Armstrong and his successor were to discover, declined, without tangible evidence, to consider the imperial decrees revoked. The result of Britain's refusal was that the American Non-intercourse Act went into effect against the Mother-country alone.

By this time Armstrong had had enough, and more than enough, of his mission to Paris. In spite of all his protests, in spite of Napoleon's apparent concessions, the intolerable situation with regard to American shipping persisted. In September 1810 the Minister left for home, leaving Jonathan Russell behind as Chargé d'affaires.

During the following spring Madison and Monroe, the latter of whom had just become Secretary of State, discussed the situation in all its bearings. The immediate issue was, whether it was worth while sending a Minister to France to take Armstrong's place. Evidence from the American Consuls showed clearly that Napoleon's decrees still operated and that the sequestered American vessels had been actually confiscated. Was it possible, after this, to continue regular diplomatic relations with France?

It was at this critical moment that Napoleon intervened and answered the question. His Foreign Minister, the Duc de Bassano, informed Russell, the Chargé d'affaires, that the Emperor had authorized "the admission of the American cargoes which had been provisionally placed on deposit." This was enough for the over-credulous Madison; he named a new Minister to France, and Franco-American relations were continued.

Armstrong's influential brother-in-law and diplomatic predecessor, Robert Livingston, died in 1813. But still another gifted brother-in-law, Edward Livingston, was just then hob-nobbing at New Orleans with General Andrew Jackson, an intimacy which, twenty years later, was to result in his also receiving the gift of the thorny French mission.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Armstrong had passed a strenuous six years in France, yet had accomplished little or nothing. When, on his return, the war with Britain, which had long been foreseen and which Napoleon's tactics rendered inevitable, broke out in 1812, Armstrong was appointed Secretary of War. But in this capacity he proved a no more conspicuous success than he had been in Paris, and public opinion, after the disastrous Canadian campaign and the British capture of Washington, compelled his resignation. He survived until 1843.

CHAPTER VII

BARLOW (1811–12)

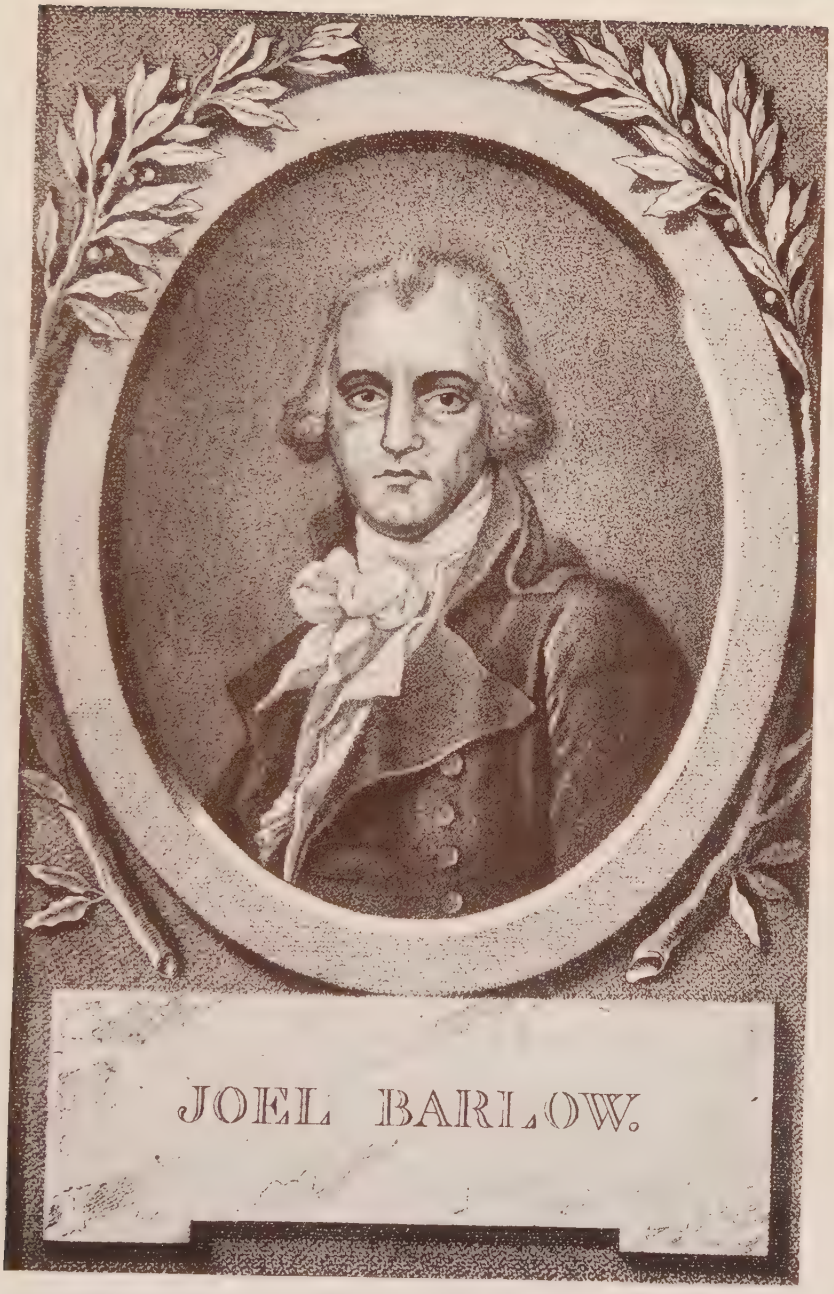
"He is certainly a very great genius," wrote a correspondent of General Greene in 1780 concerning a Connecticut youth of the name of Barlow, "and has undertaken a work which, I am persuaded, will do honour to himself and his Country—if he is enabled to prosecute it in the manner he has proposed. It is entitled *The Vision of Columbus*, and in the course of the poem will bring into view upon a large scale all the great events that have *or will take place* on this Continent. . . . But the difficulty is, it will be a labour of three years at least, and his patrimony, which consist in continental bills, is by no means sufficient to support him." [1]

The *magnus opus* upon which this young poetical genius, Joel Barlow, future Minister to France, was then engaged may be said to have occupied him, with intervals of preaching, soldiering, lawyering, land speculation, commerce and diplomacy, for the remainder of his life. Barlow's varied career resembles that of other humbly born Americans who achieved eminence in public life. But Andrew Jackson and Lincoln were no poets; Barlow was not only a poet, but an epic poet.

Barlow emerged from Yale College in 1778 when he was twenty-four. Foiled in obtaining a tutorship or a commission in the Continental Army, and being well read in divinity, he accepted a military chaplaincy and went off to preach sermons to General Washington's soldiers, who, half-fed and half-clad, were then in signal need of spiritual consolation. He also shared their lot, learnt how to clean and load a musket, and made himself generally useful. In a letter to a friend he notes (October 2, 1780):

"I have been to attend the execution of Major André, Adjutant-General of the British Army, hanged as a spy."

[1] Greene Papers: Letter of Captain David Humphreys, April 10, 1780.



JOEL BARLOW.

He does not, indeed, state that on that melancholy occasion he sought to alleviate the anguish of the condemned man by reading to him extracts from his *Vision of Columbus*; but we learn that this was one of his favourite means of imparting solace and patriotic fortitude to his own compatriots. Once he was invited to dine with General Washington ("the greatest man on earth") and generously offered the Commander-in-Chief a copy of his verses as far as they had then progressed. But as these have not been found amongst Washington's papers it is possible that he (or one of his watchful aides-de-camp) successfully evaded the gift. It was no time to add to the terrors of a difficult campaign.

After the war Barlow, backed by a large body of subscribers, published the first "sketch" of his great poem consisting of above 5,000 lines and dedicated it to that "great and good King," Louis XVI of France, who had so handsomely assisted the favoured heirs of Columbus in achieving their independence. The world was now enabled, provisionally at least, to judge of the merits of Barlow's performance. To us it imparts a knowledge of Barlow's character and his comprehensive patriotism. He wrote in heroic couplets, taking Pope's version of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as a model.

> I sing the Mariner who first unfurled
> An Eastern banner o'er the Western world.

His hero, the great Genoan, thrust into jail by the ungrateful King of Spain, has a vision in which appear before him successively all the future glories and shining characters of the vast continent he has discovered, more especially the poet's own friends and contemporaries. Barlow was a magnificent and uncompromising patriot, before whose encomiastic fervour the rhetorical excesses of Patrick Henry, Jefferson and Samuel Adams seem pale and ineffective effusions. To him America was already, by favour of Heaven, the superior of all lands on earth, her sons the noblest and her daughters the chastest and most beautiful. Viewed historically, as a stimulator of the national consciousness and the national vanity, Barlow's poem, which had an enthusiastic domestic reception, almost deserves to rank with

the Declaration of Independence and Washington's Farewell Address. It is, however, a pity that there is so much of it and that the poet showed so little discrimination in the objects of his laudation. Read to-day, we can with fortitude and even with complacence endure a galaxy of stanzas on the Father of his Country ; but it is less easy for us to support reams of iambic pentameters like the following :

> HEATH for impending toil his falchion draws,
> And fearless WOOSTER aids the sacred cause ;
> *Mercer* advanced an early death to prove,
> SINCLAIR and MIFFLIN swift to combat move ;
> Here stood PUTMAN, scarred with ancient scars.

We might condone :

> Sage FRANKLIN next anon with cheerful mien,
> Who smiled unruffled over the solemn scene ;

but even a grateful posterity must weary of this sort of thing :

> Persuasive DICKINSON, the farmer's boast,
> Recording *Thomson*, pride of all the host ;
> *Nash*, *Jay*, the *Livingstons* in council great,
> *Rutledge* and *Laurens* held the rolls of fate.

In this verbose work, whose title was subsequently changed to *The Columbiad*, and of which a magnificent edition in quarto was subsequently produced in France, Barlow sought to emulate, and even surpass, Voltaire's *Henriade*. What he very surely and incontestably achieved was oblivion. Indeed, we may say, the first and most ambitious American epic is to-day the deadest.[1]

After moving to the western country and engaging in various occupations, including the law and land speculation, for some years with his young wife, Ruth Baldwin, Barlow went to France in the capacity of commission merchant. He was in Paris when the Revolution broke out. Like his

[1] Commenting in the *Edinburgh Review* (1807) on American resentment against England, Sydney Smith wrote, in his usual highly satiric vein : "We, however, remember no other anti-American crime of which we were guilty than a preference for Shakespeare and Milton over Joel Barlow and Timothy Dwight. That opinion we must take the liberty of retaining. There is nothing in Dwight comparable to the finest passages of *Paradise Lost* ; nor is Mr. Barlow ever humorous or pathetic, as the great bard of the English stage is humorous and pathetic."

friend, Tom Paine, he became an active partisan in the cause of liberty, abandoned "the great and good" King Louis to his fate, was elected to the Convention and as "Citizen" Barlow added several hundred pregnant new stanzas to his ever-growing *chef-d'œuvre*, besides writing several pamphlets on the burning questions of the hour.

Eventually Barlow returned to America, the possessor of a respectable fortune. He there found himself regarded as a man of genius and statesmanship, with a peculiar and intimate knowledge of French affairs. He was very highly esteemed by Jefferson, Monroe and Madison, the last of whom, now elected President, did public opinion no violence by naming the patriot-poet General Armstrong's successor as Minister Plenipotentiary to France.

And, to do him justice, the new Minister, in addition to an imposing personal appearance, had acquired considerable knowledge and sagacity. Besides, relations with France and Napoleon were, as we have seen, at such a parlous pass that there were few statesmen in America who would have cared for the task of unravelling the diplomatic knots or of facing the inevitable humiliations which official representation at the Imperial Court then involved.

True, all American vessels sequestered after November 2, 1810, had been ordered to be released and American vessels conveying only American products were henceforth to be admitted. But in practice the ordinance was disregarded, and Barlow was instructed to lodge a strong protest. He was also to try to secure more liberal commercial arrangements and to present to the Emperor a handsome bill for losses resulting from the enforcement of his high-handed decrees.

So duly after seven years' absence, he and his wife and family re-established themselves in their old quarters in the rue de Vaugirard. On September 20, 1811, Barlow announced to the Foreign Minister, the Duc de Bassano, his arrival in Paris. He came at the worst possible time. Napoleon had his hands too full of his own fresh schemes of conquest to pay much attention to American complaints of ill-treatment or to listen to overtures for a treaty of commerce. In an interview with the new envoy, Bassano

informed him that the Emperor was just off to join his army, and could not possibly grant an audience, but that Barlow might " enter immediately into the duties of his office and postpone his presentation " until his Majesty's return.

Barlow waited nearly two months for a further interview with the Foreign Minister, who had meanwhile joined his master, and then (November 10) opened his mind on the situation in a lengthy communication.

He began by reminding the Emperor that " the only interests which then were mutual between France and the United States, save these of affection growing out of ecollected benefits, were the interests of commerce." In the war between France and Great Britain both belligerents had overlooked the rights of neutrals and acts of violence had been repeatedly committed. The Minister recalled the revocation of the Berlin and Milan Decrees and in consequence the application of the American embargo to Britain alone. But how, pursued Barlow, has the French Government performed its part of the bargain ?

" True, the blockade of the British Isles has been literally revoked and no United States vessels are now taken. But what advantage to American commerce has resulted ? Municipal orders and regulations in France still performed the work of the Imperial Decrees.

" It is now a year since the Maritime Decrees were declared to be repealed and there are at this day no American ships in the ports of France except those that are detained by force and a few others under special licences. The ordinary state of our commerce, as now excluded from England, would send into France at least 2,000 ships a year. What are the causes of this difference ?

" Why do we see such a total cessation of commerce between two nations that have so much need of each other's productions—two nations that are really so friendly and even affectionate in every other relation between themselves ? "

The American envoy then went on to enumerate the causes. The frequent changes in laws regulating commerce, so that merchants in America are in the dark ; no means of distinguishing American vessels from English ; the regulation that the total amount of the proceeds of the cargo shall be

exported in the same vessel in French produce, two-thirds of it to be silks. All this, he argued, was a ponderous and effective clog on free commerce.

"English manufacturers are now shut out from the United States, and the goods we used to draw from England are now drawn from the Continent, at least in some degree, which would be greater if our commerce with France was unembarrassed."

He pointed out that the Spanish American colonies offered a great opportunity to French commerce.

"But, unlike the North Americans, these people have no ships and no active commercial capital. They must therefore receive foreign manufactures from the hands that bring them.

"Let me ask—Shall they receive them from the North Americans or from the English? for no other nation at present can carry them. Shall they receive from them French fabrics or English fabrics? Shall their future commercial affections, relations and habits be formed with the subjects of Napoleon or with those of George? These are questions of great importance: they are questions which the Emperor alone can answer, and which he must answer at this moment or it will be too late. The English Government is already seizing the occasion and beginning to answer."

At this point Barlow becomes more persuasive. It is true, he tells Bassano:

"Our people are chiefly of English origin; they have been habituated to English fabrics, and their taste has been formed from that circumstance to prefer them in most cases to the French, even when the latter are superior."

But, says Barlow in effect, let us brush all this aside. He, the author of *The Vision of Columbus*, can see in his mind's eye the whole of his countrymen clad in French clothes, shod in French boots, sitting in French chairs, eating their food with French knives and forks. He does not paint any companion picture, but contents himself with pointing out the solid advantages of paying for these French goods in American products.[1]

[1] Legation Letter-book: Barlow to the Duc de Bassano, November 10, 1811.

Barlow believed that the whole of Continental Europe, now controlled by the Emperor, was a vast potential market for American goods. As these would pass through French territory, French commercial houses, French canals and French wagons, Napoleon might easily collect as much as five hundred millions of francs annually in duties, which was five times the revenue yield in Necker's time.

Here was certainly an attractive bait; but, if Napoleon should be so blind as to reject it, he must be shown the dire consequences.

"My duty obliges me to utter on this subject another truth equally solemn. This I shall do with a frankness becoming the representative of a Government that has no occasion for concealment. The United States *must have a commerce* and—*an extensive commerce*. It is congenial to their habits, it is essential to their prosperity, their agricultural wealth, their growing population, their great number of ships and seamen, their length of coast, indented with convenient ports, their mass of active capital—in short, the need was imperative and the people already impatient. If France refused them this commerce, then, to obtain it, *we go back to England!*"

Having uttered this solemn warning, Barlow seems to have imagined that Napoleon would capitulate at once. How could he fail to see the danger he ran? No: he must immediately release all American ships and property and draft a new treaty of commerce. So the American Minister concluded his note by mentioning that the frigate which brought him across the Atlantic was leaving in a few days. No time was to be lost and he would like to report at once to the President that the business was settled.

He waited. No answer came the following day. He waited a week: still no answer; a fortnight passed, and then, when Barlow's communication was acknowledged by the Foreign Minister, there came a curt observation by the Emperor that "the Americans had not caused their flag to be respected by the English, consequently they could not protect their commerce."

This reproach stung Barlow. He wrote at once saying that the United States had now enough ships of war to escort their commerce to France and that Congress would

that very winter take steps to this effect. He again besought his Imperial Majesty to lose no time. England was at that moment in commercial distress : she had already lost twelve millions sterling of foreign trade. Now was the time to strike. Think of the profits of the West Indian trade alone !

" The linens of Brittany, the cottons of Normandy, the silks and woollens of Languedoc have been locked up in France and their place supplied by English goods. To which [pursued the patriotic Barlow] we may add, though not to our present argument, that the brandies of Bordeaux and Barcelona have yielded their place in this commerce to the whisky of the United States."

Even this final touch of *ad hominem* eloquence was wasted on the Emperor, who had probably never heard of American whisky, and whose chief interest in America throughout all the ensuing winter lay in bottling up her ships, seizing her merchandise and imprisoning her sailors. England, as we have seen, refused to revoke her Orders in Council, alleging that the French Decrees were still unrevoked, and (when expostulated with) simply demanded to be shown any official document to the contrary.

And indeed doubt on this latter point was fast becoming so general that Barlow was perturbed. On March 25 the Duc de Bassano sent Napoleon a lengthy report on Neutral Rights in which not a syllable was uttered about the repeal of the decrees. On the heels of this came a surprising declaration of the British Prince Regent in council (April 21), that it was still believed by the British Government that the French Decrees of Berlin and Milan remained in force, as applicable to the United States. On reading this declaration the indignant Barlow addressed Bassano as follows (May 1) :

" In the note I had the honour to address your Excellency on November 10 last, the spirit of the English Government was so far noticed as to anticipate the fact, now proved by experience, that its Orders in Council violating the rights of neutrals would not be revoked. The declaration of the Prince Regent of the 21st of April has placed that fact beyond all question. In doing this he has repeated the assertion so often

advanced by his Ministers and judges, that the decrees of France of a similar character are likewise unrevoked.

"It is much to be desired that the French Government would now make and publish an authentic act, declaring the Berlin and Milan Decrees, as relative to the United States, to have ceased in November 1819, declaring that they have not been applied in any instance, since that time, and that they shall not be so applied in future.

"Such an act on the part of France is absolutely necessary to the American Government, and though solicited as an accommodation it might well be demanded as a right. . . . It is well known that *great doubts* exist in America and in Congress, *whether the Berlin and Milan Decrees are at this day* repealed, or even modified in regard to the United States. Your Report of the 10th of March, by its unaccountable reserve, will expand this doubt.

"The Emperor owes it to his own dignity and reputation to remove doubts and silence every tongue. Why should he leave it in the power of artful men to assert, and of credulous men to believe, that he has not performed his word ?" [1]

It was indeed a critical moment. President Madison was about to declare war on England in consequence of the latter's policy towards American shipping—a policy directly due to the French Decrees.

If they have been repealed, urged Barlow, as Bassano has constantly asserted, let the American Government see copies of the repealing Acts. Send them quickly. A corvette—a very fast sailer—was waiting at Cherbourg to convey them to America.[2]

"They would arrive in Washington as soon as the Declaration of the Prince Regent, a piece most artfully calculated for that Country. Left to take its course in America without its Antidote, it will produce a deleterious effect. But being confronted by your documents, it will return to its native Cabinet with the Contempt of an insulted Nation and cover its Author with Confusion."

But Napoleon was a perfect master of the game he was playing. By keeping back the official promulgation of the

[1] Legation Letter-book.

[2] There was always a fast sailer waiting somewhere to convey Napoleon's epochal messages to America. Alas, it was never needed!

repeal of August 5, 1810, he calculated on embroiling the United States and Great Britain in war. When it was not necessary for the game to be kept up longer, it would be easy for the Foreign Minister to pretend that the order repealing the Decree of Rambouillet had been sent to the American Legation at some time and had somehow miscarried.

As Bassano did not reply immediately the American Minister called on him at the Foreign Office.

"I found," he reports (May 12), from "a pretty sharp conversation with the duke that there was a singular reluctance to answering my note of the 1st of May." However, in the course of the conversation the duke produced a copy of the Decree of April 28, 1811.

"I made no comment on the strange manner in which it had been so long concealed from me, and probably from you. I only asked him if that decree had been published. He said, no, but declared it had been communicated to my predecessor here, and likewise sent to M. Serrurier [French Minister at Washington] with orders to communicate it to you. I assured him it was not among the archives of this Legation; that I never before had heard of it; and since he had consented to answer my note, I desired him to send to me in that official manner a copy of that decree, and of any other documents that might prove to the incredulous of my country (not to me) that the Decrees of Berlin and Milan were in good faith and unconditionally repealed with regard to the United States."[1]

That "not to me" was very tactful; it was also probably true. Barlow's nature was singularly trustful.

The duke's written reply did not reach Barlow until May 11.

"In conversing with you [wrote the duke] about the note which you did me the honour to address to me on the 1st of May, I could not conceal from you my surprise at the doubt which you had expressed in that note respecting the revocation of the Decrees of Berlin and Milan. That revocation was proven by many official Acts, by all my correspondence with your predecessors and with you, by the decision in favour of American vessels. You had done me the honour

[1] Barlow to Secretary Monroe, May 12, 1812.

to ask a copy of the letters which the grand judge and the minister of the finances wrote on the 25th December, 1810, to secure the first effects of that measure, and you have said, sir, that the decree of the revocation of the Decrees of Berlin and Milan in regard to the Americans was not known to you.

" I have the honour to send you, as you have desired, a copy of these three Acts. You will consider them, without doubt, sir, as the plainest answer which I could give to this part of your note. As to the other questions to which that note relates, I will take care to lay them before the Emperor. You know already, sir, the sentiments which his Majesty has expressed in favour of American commerce, and the good dispositions which have induced him to appoint a plenipotentiary to treat with you on that important interest."

If all this was true why had these repealing decrees never been seen before ? Could it be possible that they were really sent at the time and mislaid at the Paris Legation ? Barlow, in his perplexity, sat down and wrote Jonathan Russell, the former Chargé d'affaires, now in London, sending him copies of the documents.

" The most remarkable is the decree of the 28th April, 1811. This piece I had never before seen ; it appears that it had not been published at the time of its date, and not finding it among the archives of this Legation, I suspect, that by some omission or neglect, it was not communicated to you as it ought to have been. The duke, however, assures me that it was so communicated. Be this as it may, I am convinced it has not been made known to the British Government."

He considered the communication to be " so important in the present crisis of our affairs with England," that he despatched the American cruiser *Wasp* with it, with orders to return with his answer as quickly as possible.

Russell's reply was short and emphatic. Until communicated by Barlow he had " never heard of such a document as the Decree of 1811." " I persuade myself," he wrote to the Secretary of State, " that there is no necessity of my adding any further explanation or comment on this strange business." [1]

Strange business indeed ! After Napoleon's manœuvres

[1] For an account of the finding of the unsent Decree see *infra*, p. 149.

were crowned with success, on August 8, 1812, we find the credulous Barlow writing to Bassano :

" Your Excellency will have perceived by the public journals that war is doubtless declared by the United States against Great Britain."

So the war had come, after all ! However, there was still some comfort to be extracted from a bad business. Surely, thought the harassed Minister, the fact that America has flung herself into this conflict will make Napoleon ready to propitiate my country, now once more the ally of France. There is pathos in his next appeal :

" I hope this state of things will induce his Majesty to devote a few moments of his thoughts to our affairs and cause his Ministers to answer some of the notes I have had the honour to present him with in the last six months."

But the Emperor was not in the least touched by the American Minister's humility, if he ever heard of it. For he was just then at Smolensk, at the head of a huge, doomed army invading Russia. There he took the fatal decision to press on to Moscow. Neither he nor his Ministers had any time to waste on the new war against England in America, and the news of the French victory at Borodino made the French officials, both military and civil, everywhere more than usually arrogant. Everybody seems to have expected a continuance of victories, and to Barlow the Emperor seemed as powerful as ever. At the same time, when his despatches were seized in the most flagrant manner at Bayonne and sent on to the French Foreign Minister, he was moved to dignified protest. This happened yet again, and when he complained he was told that his messengers should conceal despatches in their boots or clothing, as the military had orders to seize all papers. Barlow indignantly refused. He would rather, he said, go without his correspondence.

" Knowing, therefore, that my Government will disdain to order its messengers to conceal the letters they carry, I cannot hope to receive any more as long as the present orders are in force."

But a letter from the Secretary of State got though, filled with such requests and reproaches that Barlow was in despair. Naturally, the Washington Government could not understand the situation. Naturally, they were indignant at their country being flouted by Napoleon and his Ministry. They thought their envoy should make a bolder stand, that he should brush aside the host of ministerial flunkeys in Paris and present himself directly before the Emperor in person, wherever he was. It was not so easy an adventure as it sounded, but Barlow determined to try it. He explained his situation by letter to the Duc de Bassano. Surely the Emperor must see the value, at this conjuncture of affairs, of American friendship and co-operation. He wished to make a personal appeal; in short, he insisted on seeing Napoleon himself.

Bassano, in reply, was not unsympathetic. The result was an invitation to repair to Vilna, where Napoleon then was. On October 25 Barlow acknowledged it as follows:

"I accept your invitation and leave Paris to-morrow for Vilna, where I hope to arrive in fifteen or eighteen days. My Secretary of Legation and one servant will compose all my suite."

Full of confidence and zeal, the Minister set out on the 27th with his son Thomas, leaving the Legation in charge of the second secretary, Marradier.

The Minister carried with him a trunk full of papers relating to matters which he intended to take up with Napoleon. The war with England had vastly increased the business of the Legation, as it had done of all the American consulates in France. There was the issuing of letters of marque, the fitting out of privateers, the affairs of seamen, the disposal of prizes and the exchange of prisoners. At this time the prisons of France were filled with American seamen who had been taken on board British ships and found to have received British pay. For the release of these Barlow intended to intercede with the Emperor.

A circular was addressed to the leading prisoner at each of the American prisons in France holding out hopes of an early release.

"The Minister [they were told] left this city on a journey to Vilna, where his object is to do some good for the interest of his country and of his countrymen. He hopes to obtain from his Majesty the release of all the American citizens not at the depots of prisoners of war, in consequence of which you are hereby requested to let this circumstance be known to your fellow-prisoners at [Arras, Verdun, Besançon, etc.] and to inform them in the most explicit manner that it would be unnecessary for any one of them to write to his Excellency on the subject of their release. You could get the commander's leave to have such an advertisement posted up at your depot so that no one could plead ignorance."

One of the Minister's last instructions concerned the manning of the *True-blooded Yankee*, a converted British prize sloop at Marseilles. He agreed to her captain's taking with him all the American seamen who were without employment in the different ports, on his agreeing to pay their travelling expenses. To each of the American Consuls a letter was sent:

"You will, therefore, be pleased to have the seamen within your district, whose services are not wanted there, furnished with proper passports to repair to Brest or Morlaix and have them marched in the most economic manner, under the direction of Mr. Onnord, agent for Captain Haley, to whom you may deliver up the enemy ship, which will then be at his charge and expenses."

A fortnight passed, and Marradier received word from his chief, then at Frankfort, that he was in good health and spirits. On his arrival at Vilna, Barlow reported himself to Bassano, who told him that the Emperor was just then too busy to see him, but he would shortly arrange an interview.

The hapless American Minister to the Court of Napoleon found himself caught up in a whirl of military excitement and activity. As yet he could not make up his mind what was happening—whether the signs he perceived on every hand, the galloping to and fro of marshals, the excited groups of soldiers and civilians, the interminable stream of wagons, were the signs of victory or defeat. Vague rumours of what had happened at Moscow reached him, but it was not easy for a foreigner to pierce to the heart of the truth.

"I am well aware," he wrote on November 21, repeating

his demand for an audience, " that the immense preoccupations of his Imperial Majesty can leave him but small portions of time to attend to subjects apparently so distant." Yet—he hoped he would find " a few moments " for America.

Poor Barlow ! He was destined to suffer the crowning disappointment of his life. Yet he was inspired to offer one other proposal, which, coming just then from another man, might have been regarded by Napoleon as the bitterest irony. The peasants were bringing in cartloads of rifles from all the roads of the country-side, flung down by the sick and dying French fugitives from Moscow. Thereupon, Barlow sent a message to the Emperor that he had been charged by his Government to export to the United States as many rifles as he could procure—" I should say twenty-five thousand to thirty thousand." These would be put aboard fast sailing ships so as to arrive in America before the opening of the spring campaign ! Thus France could assist to fight England by land on the other side of the Atlantic.

What answer was returned to this naive proposal is not known, as Napoleon was about to shake the early snows of Russia from his riding-boots and hurry back to Paris. Barlow did not even know if he was gone. He lingered a few days, and then—the heart crushed out of him at the futility of it all—all his efforts, all his hopes of championing his country before the mighty Conqueror of Europe, his earnest desire to right himself in the eyes of the President and Secretary Monroe, who were just then being criticized in the Senate for having sent the author of *The Columbiad* on such a mission—he, too, turned back reluctantly towards Paris.

The weather was bitterly cold, and the inns and vehicles were so crowded with fugitives that Barlow often had to suffer the greatest misery and privation. On December 18 he was at Warsaw. He had caught cold on the chest and was already a sick man, but " anxious to get home, he proceeded on, when he was suddenly seized with a violent inflammation of the lungs The day before Christmas his son got him into an inn near Cracow ; the fever increased with fatal rapidity and in twenty-four hours he was dead." [1]

[1] Marradier to Monroe, January 15, 1813.

His sister-in-law, Clara Baldwin, wrote from Paris to Mrs. President Madison, describing the Minister's sufferings after he left Vilna, from the intense cold and for want even of a hovel to shelter under at night, obliged to travel constantly and "to eat during that time frozen bread and to drink frozen wine."

From the Journal of Thomas Barlow we learn that on December 4 he heard of the battle of Beresina and the defeat of the French. After they had left Vilna Napoleon passed them on the road. "It was the coldest night I ever knew—14 below zero," writes Thomas. Only ten miles from Vilna the carriage broke down and the postilion ran off. Later they crossed the Niemen on the ice, arriving at Warsaw on December 18.

"At Zarnowitch," related Miss Baldwin, "he found a good house and kind attentions, but it was too late."

His son wished to embalm and carry away his father's body, but could not do so, owing to the ravaging Cossacks who were harrying their rear.[1]

It was a tragic end to a chequered career. Barlow had done his best; he was only one more of Napoleon's victims. He never should have set forth on such a mission; in fact, it would have been far better and more dignified if America had declined to make any humiliating overtures to Napoleon until he had acknowledged—as he afterwards came to acknowledge—the great wrongs he had committed against them and for which, nearly a quarter of a century later, France had to pay.

There is, of course, the likelihood that Napoleon despised Citizen Barlow, as he disliked Citizen Monroe and all the other foreign Jacobins, and that even the authorship of *The Columbiad* was no passport to his imperial favour.

[1] Barlow's death was not mentioned in any Paris paper, and was almost ignored in America. There was a meeting of a few Americans in Paris, who despatched a letter of condolence to the Minister's widow.

CHAPTER VIII

CRAWFORD (1813–15)

"In consequence of the nomination to the office of Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of France and its acceptance by Mr. Crawford, Mr. C. left his family residence in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, the 26th of April, 1813, for the City of Washington."

Thus, somewhat pompously and circumstantially, in a blank octavo volume preserved among the archives of the Paris Embassy, the ill-fated Barlow's successor, William Harris Crawford, begins what he intended should be an elaborate personal diary of his mission. He goes on to recount that from Washington he went to New York and there embarked in the American sloop-of-war *Argus*, and after twenty-three days, successfully evading the British cruisers who would have liked to seize his person, he arrived safe and sound at Lorient in France. Stirring times these—on both sides of the Atlantic ; a crisis was rapidly approaching in Europe, and Crawford doubtless felt that an account of such a mission as his would be eagerly scanned by future historians. But reaching Paris on July 24, and finding the great Napoleon absent at Dresden and so much pressing and fatiguing routine legation business awaiting him, Crawford apparently abandoned his intention, and, so far as he is concerned, the rest of the beautiful volume in question is entirely blank.

To begin with, the new Minister was called upon to compose the scandalous quarrels amongst the American Consuls in France which were shocking both the French and American community. Privateering and prize money had been too much for some of them. Warden, the Consul in Paris, had been carrying things with a very high hand indeed. When

the news of Minister Barlow's death arrived, Warden had promptly proclaimed himself Consul-General and entered upon the functions of American Chargé d'affaires without the slightest official authority. It was necessary to remove him, a proceeding not accomplished without a struggle; for Warden defied Crawford for a time and refused to surrender his papers. Lee, the Consul at Bordeaux, had to be rebuked, and anxiety and overwork soon killed Vail, the Consul at Lorient, whose successor had to be chosen. Consul Vail's son was taken by Crawford into service at the Legation.

French ports were full of American sailors whose ships had been sunk and who were getting a pension, and privateers abounded who were looking for crews and cargoes. At a moment when Napoleon was making his fiercest struggle to avert the disaster which so clearly impended, Crawford wrote:

"The vexations which American vessels experience in France are numerous and ought to be remedied, but it is impossible to say whether they will attract the attention of the Government sufficiently to produce a competent remedy. The change in the Minister of Foreign Relations, which has been unfortunate for the United States, affords at least a plausible reason for still further delay. When the negotiation is to be terminated and whether its issue is to be amicable or hostile are events which time only can develop." [1]

Meanwhile, the war between the United States and Britain was proceeding by sea and land, but little news as yet came to Paris. Crawford wrote:

"I fully cherish the hope that the next arrival from the United States will bring us the pleasing intelligence that Montreal will be the winter quarters of the Northern Army. If the war of Spain is terminated this winter, as I imagine it will be, and especially if the war with the coalized Powers should be accommodated, England will have a large veteran force which will lack employment and which will no doubt be transported to the United States or Canada in the spring.

"If Montreal and all the waters are in our possession it will require great forces and long and continued exertions to bring the war again upon the borders of New York and Vermont."

[1] Crawford to Consul Lee, December 13, 1813.

But whatever the value of his forecasts about America, Crawford was soon spared any speculation as to the course events were to take in Europe. Leipzig had been lost. France was invaded, and Napoleon was doomed. Yet, even after his first important defeat at La Rothière he might have kept his throne by the surrender of Belgium and Savoy and acceptance of the old frontiers. This was unpalatable, and at the last moment he determined again to offer battle to Blücher. He was again beaten, and before he could rally new forces Paris had surrendered. On April 6 the Emperor's abdication was signed at Fontainebleau.

It was an exciting beginning for Crawford's mission.

"The rapid succession of events in this capital [reported the American Minister on April 3], which have entirely changed the face of everything but the character of the Parisians, has dazzled the eyes of every class of people here. How long it will last I cannot foresee. My own impression is that now the Allied Sovereigns have made use of the Provisional Government, which was necessary for their purpose, a different tone will be assumed. The rights of the vanquishers to contribution, and in such a magazine of wealth, will not be relinquished *from love to the French nation or friendship to the new sovereign.* The Parisians [he went on] never dream of such disagreeable things. These are the halcyon days of reconciliation in the great European family of peace, which will be without end. The departure and the deposition of *Buonaparte* has eradicated the germs of future wars. It seems that his sudden revenge has entirely unmanned this man, who for nearly twenty years has been the terror of Europe and the Boast of France—of Parisians. Instead of dying as he has lived, he has stipulated for an inglorious retreat and a mercenary provision for his future existence."

The Minister adds:

"The Provisional Government has declared that a state of peace exists between France and the coalized Powers. The United States and Great Britain are now the only belligerents." [1]

While Crawford wrote, the Tsar was taking steps to compose likewise an Anglo-American peace, and commissioners

[1] Crawford to J. M. Forbes.

despatched from Washington had arrived in Europe, and were now at Gothenburg.

To these commissioners Crawford now wrote at length detailing events after the battle of March 30, a letter of interest to us as the hitherto and unpublished impressions of the chief American then on the spot.

" The next day the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia entered Paris at the head of about 50,000 of the finest troops in the world. The remainder of their immense army either defiled north or south side of the city or remained in their position on the east, which was the field of the battle.

" The Emperor of Russia, with his Minister of Foreign Relations, went directly to the house of the Prince of Benevento [Talleyrand] who convened the Senate the same evening and had himself and three of his friends, with one devoted Bourbonist, named to the Provisional Government. The Senate have deposed Napoleon Bonaparte and directed the Provisional Government to form a Constitution, which has been accomplished and accepted by the Senate and the small portion of the Legislative Corps who are now in Paris.

" The proceedings of the Senate and of the Provisional Government have overturned the authority of the Emperor with his Army and especially with his ablest generals. He seems to have sunk without an effort, at least, without an effort corresponding in any degree with his former fame. Such at least is the conclusion which I drew from the facts communicated to the public. It is certain that he has agreed to retire with his family to the Isle of Elba upon a pension of six million livres. From the moment that he saw it was impossible for him to reign he ought to have died. The manner was in his election."

Crawford could be pitiless to the Emperor in his defeat.

" A strange infatuation seems to have influenced his conduct during the last six months. Still relying upon his talents and his power, he refused at Prague to secure at last the neutrality of Austria by giving her everything she required. After having retreated across the Rhine, he reluctantly accepted the basis which the Allies proposed and which there is some reason to believe they were sincerely disposed to adopt. Lord Castlereagh's mission, however, according to the best view of the subject which I have been

able to take, was intended solely to prevent this accommodation. . . . There must have been great address employed in managing the Emperor of Austria,[1] who had rejected all idea of overthrowing the reigning dynasty. The infatuation of the Emperor and his arrogance to his father-in-law greatly contributed to the success of the arts employed by the British Foreign Secretary."

Crawford thought the Emperor of Austria had been duped.

" The introduction of the ancient dynasty is not acceptable to the great body of the people at Paris ; not one man in a hundred puts on the white cockade. On the day of the entry of the allied sovereigns all the persons devoted to their ancient Kings endeavoured to make themselves as conspicuous as possible and to conceal the smallness of their numbers by continual change of place. If the mob of Paris had been put in motion it would have been in favour of a free Government. The men now in power would, as far as I have been able to judge, have preferred the succession of the King of Rome, with a Regency provided by the Empress ; but for the Emperor Alexander, who, under the modest exterior of submitting everything to the will of the French people, dictates to the Senate and Provisional Government at least this article of her constitution."

Ten days later the American Minister reports :

" So far as I can judge from what I see and hear, the change has not been very popular with the people, or the army. The immense superiority of the Allies is the solid foundation upon which this Revolution rests. I believe it will be for the benefit of the nation. Napoleon has no more skill in the field of battle than he has discovered in the extirpation of all ideas of civil liberty. The essence of his system was the concentration of all power, civil, political and military, in himself; success in this last war would have ensured success in all his attempts upon the liberties of the nation. Indeed, it is yet to be ascertained if he had not already succeeded in this, if the nation ever had any such ideas."

Crawford had more leisure to contemplate what was happening about him, because he was virtually, at this time, cut off from America and his only news of transatlantic events

[1] Father of the Empress Marie Louise.

came from English sources. The embargo in the United States did not permit neutral vessels to leave before July 15, unless peace should intervene, which in his opinion was not likely. The Paris Legation, nevertheless, was pestered by people who wished to go to America, not a few of whom were people of social and political position. What his own feelings were, Crawford tells us. He did not want any more foreigners in America.

" The more I see and know of Europe, the less I am disposed to see them incorporated in the American family. Those who emigrate with an honest intention of settling their posterity amongst us should be protected in their mechanical and agricultural pursuits, but should be prohibited from interfering with the political or commercial interests of the nation."

On May 21 he writes to Beasly, commissary for American prisoners in London, about the Spanish King, Ferdinand.

" The news from Spain is of the most afflicting nature to the friends of civil liberty. I hope it is not true. If it is, Ferdinand deserves and I hope will receive the severest chastisement from the men who have so nobly struggled against the bold invader, to whom he basely and pusillanimously resigned his crown and his regal rights.

" His attempts to trample upon the rights and liberty of those who fought for their national independence and for his restoration to the throne ought to draw upon him the resentment not of patriotic Spaniards only, but of the friends of free governments throughout the world. If Heaven is just and interferes in the concerns of mortals, this attempt to overthrow the Constitution of Spain must fail."

But Crawford was much more concerned over the report which reached him in September that Washington had been captured by the British forces and evacuated two days later, " after destroying [he hears] the President's house, the Capitol and the public buildings, the naval yard and vessels in it. I am fearful that the news is too true."

It filled the Minister with a longing to return home.

" I most sincerely wish, with you, that I was in the United States. Not that I expect that I should be able to render any

essential service to the nation, but certainly I should not be less useful there than I am here. For several years to come, at least two, England substantially governs Europe. American Ministers are mere cyphers calculated to swell the crowd in the palaces of Kings upon gala days. This will continue to be the case until the arrogance of England shall rouse the indignation of all the maritime States of Europe. A little discretion on her part would protract the event indefinitely; but that quality does not characterize the present rulers."

In another letter (October 21) he observes:

"The conduct of the English [in the capture of Washington] has excited universal disgust in Europe. It is possible that as the destruction of the public and other buildings has glutted their savage rage and vindictive resentment, they may affect great moderation and magnanimity in the Ghent negotiations. But I do not expect it."

Previously he had expressed his disbelief that the negotiations at Ghent would terminate in peace. Yet he admitted that:

"Appearances are more favourable than they have been since the meeting of the ministers, if we can place any confidence in the candour and sincerity of the British Government. Upon this point I am an utter infidel. I do not believe that they wish or intend to have peace."

Just at this time the Bourbon Government refused to allow an American vessel, the *Decatur*, to enter a French port, and Crawford, seeing that his protests were of no avail, became very angry.

"Whether the refusal," he wrote, "be the result of hostility to the United States or of unjustifiable subserviency to England is of no importance." It was a gross violation of the rights of neutrals, for the English privateers entered French ports freely. There was nothing more to be done, and he might as well come home. "If the United States is satisfied, I am not, and they will have to find another Minister." He thereupon withdrew from relations with the Ministry of Louis XVIII and declined to attend the King's levées.

It was a curious position. It could not be denied that

America was heavily handicapped if the war with England continued. She had embarked upon that conflict thinking to have the support and countenance of France. If Napoleon had continued in power the American Government would have been grateful for any assistance the autocrat would have been pleased to give. After all, he was England's enemy, and in that rôle far better to deal with than the Bourbons. It was perhaps only natural that the Bourbons should regard America as the enemy of their chief Ally, to whom they owed their throne ; but Crawford was disgusted with their " craven behaviour."

" The friends of free and rational Government [he wrote] in every part of Europe, but especially in France and England, look to the conduct of the United States with deep solicitude. If we rise superior to the storm which menaces with so much fury to overwhelm us, we shall establish the reputation of free representative Governments upon a basis which can never hereafter be shaken. A nation of seven millions of inhabitants who know the blessings of free government can never sink in such a struggle."

Nevertheless, a friendly overture from Talleyrand, now again Foreign Minister, starts Crawford out of his sulks. He thought it his duty once more to put forward the American claim for maritime spoliations, without much hope, however, of its even being seriously considered at present unless—there was that contingency—the " old fox," Talleyrand, were gained over.

The general impression of those who knew Talleyrand and who had access to his circle was that " nothing will be obtained unless it is made his interest to forward the claim."

The King left each Minister nearly absolute in their respective departments. Crawford told a visitor to the Legation that he believed he understood Talleyrand's character, that " he was not scrupulous in the means by which he arrived at his ends, but that he was a man of comprehensive mind and could not fail to see the course which the French interest required." To this his interlocutor said that " the interests of France would weigh nothing in opposition to his [Talleyrand's] individual *pecuniary* interest."

Crawford's reply was: "The morality of the American Government excludes the idea of corrupting or bribing the officers of other Governments. If this principle is abandoned, well, they must change their Minister, that's all." "Very well," replied his unnamed friend, "but England has no such scruples."

Crawford thought that any Declaration by the impending Congress at Vienna could have little influence on the Anglo-American peace negotiations then proceeding at Ghent.

"The European Powers are too deeply engaged in the division of the spoil which has been wrested from France to think of anything not immediately connected with it. Nothing relative to maritime rights will be settled at Vienna and of course nothing will be done there which can have the most remote relation to our contest with Great Britain."

If American affairs were affected by the proceedings of the Congress it would be by what was *not* done rather than by what *was* done.

"England knows her own maritime strength and the weakness of those who should attempt it. France, the most powerful of the maritime States after England, is at the present moment the weakest in point of fact. It may be, indeed, doubted whether she feels any objection to the extension of English power and influence at the present moment. The great body of the nation was never more hostile to England than at the present moment. This is not the case of the Government. It is useless to enquire into the cause of this difference. It is sufficient that it exists. So far will France be from interfering for the adjustment of differences between us and our enemy, or from explaining and establishing the code of public law upon a rational basis, that she will not venture to exercise towards us those rights of neutrality which Portugal has never ceased to exercise. An American vessel, loaded with cotton and potash, has been in the Loire from the 20th of September to the present time, without being suffered to enter because she is armed and because she captured an English vessel on her voyage. In the meantime, two English vessels of marque have entered and still continue to enter the ports of France without difficulty or delay. To my remonstrances upon this subject no answer has been given nor likely will be given."

To France, to Russia or to Europe united America need not look for the adjustment of maritime law or for any efficient interference in her dispute with England. "If we expect the fair exercise of the acknowledged principles of neutrality we shall only deceive ourselves. Meanwhile, the greatest possible pressure will be made upon our maritime frontier and upon our commerce."

Nevertheless, in the matter of the *Decatur*, which had been denied entry to a French port, Crawford scored one point. Despairing of getting any justice from Talleyrand, he applied in December directly to the King in council, and a royal decree was issued granting the vessel admission. It is true, the port authorities did their best to evade the order, but that only showed their disrespect of the royal Government. The vessel came in. As far as the Congress at Vienna was concerned, Crawford began to think that the British Ministers there had "lost all their influence."

"This [he wrote home] is not surprising to me, as it seems to be admitted that Lord Castlereagh is at the head of the English Embassy. If I have not entirely mistaken his physiognomy and manners, his greatness is wholly adventitious. Circumstances may force him to play a great part if they are so imperious as to bid defiance to the want of talents and discretion."

This was doing a great injustice to Castlereagh, who, however, was sadly misrepresented by his contemporaries.

What in this crisis America stood in greatest need of was money. If sufficient money were to be poured into the American Treasury "we shall triumph and make the United States respected all over the globe." [1]

A few weeks later the Minister heard that the American commissioners, Gallatin, Adams and Bayard, had succeeded at Ghent and that a Treaty of Peace was signed. This opened out the prospect of a new and more satisfactory state of things at the American Legation in Paris and the consulates throughout France.

But Crawford was under no delusion as to the United States receiving immediately any pecuniary solace for the

[1] Crawford to Bourne, November 15, 1814.

great wounds inflicted upon her shipping by Napoleon. France, at the peremptory behest of her conquerors, might disgorge hundreds of millions in indemnities; but none of these millions would, if England could help it, cross the Atlantic to America. Moreover, the situation was not yet appreciably eased. The treaty had to be ratified at Washington, and American vessels were still being kept out of French ports.

It was at this juncture, while all eyes were directed upon the Vienna Congress, that an event bursting upon Europe from another quarter shocked Kings and Governments out of their new-found security.

At the beginning of March Albert Gallatin, late American Secretary of the Treasury, arrived in Paris from Ghent. The King wished to have an unofficial chat on the international situation with this leading American commissioner who was proceeding to London to negotiate a further treaty of commerce. Gallatin called at the palace and saw the King. Two days later (March 4) his young son James wrote in his Diary: "A day of great excitement. News has reached Paris that Napoleon has made his escape from Elba and was at a little village called Cannes."

If it were true! What might not this embarrassing event portend? On March 6 Crawford seized his pen and reported Napoleon's landing and progress to the Secretary of State.

"It is impossible to foresee the results of this movement. Everything depends upon the fidelity of the troops who are marching to oppose him. It is said that Macdonald and Ney are to command them. Monsieur and the Duke of Orleans have set out for Lyons and the Duc de Berry set out this day for the same place and for Besançon. We know nothing of the immediate cause of this desperate effort. It may be the result of a settled arrangement between him and the malcontents in France, or it may be the result of measures in relation to him about to be adopted by the Congress at Vienna. A short time will dissipate the storm or give it a terrific force which will overturn the throne of the Bourbons. I will not indulge in conjectures. My next letter will give the result."

The Minister adds a significant postscript: "My health, which has been very feeble for the last four weeks, has

considerably improved." Dramatic political crises are ever an infallible tonic for the jaded diplomatist.

Writing to the Secretary of State on March 16, Crawford gives further details of Napoleon's progress.

"The *Moniteur* of this day admits that the people have risen in his favour and expelled the local authorities from Mâcon, Autun, Châlons and Dijon. It is stated, however, that none but the dregs of the people have participated in this insurrection.

"Invitations have been given to the National Guards of Paris to enrol themselves as volunteers to march against the enemy, and the gazettes boast of the zeal and devotion which has been manifested, but do not give the number which have inscribed themselves. I infer that the number has greatly disappointed the expectation of the Government, as Monsieur reviews the Guards this day in four divisions, in the different parts of the city, with a view to obtain volunteers. The marshals and commanders of different corps in parts of the kingdom distant from the scene of action give the most satisfactory account of the spirit of the troops."

But, as exactly the same thing was being said of Napoleon's followers, Crawford thought that not much reliance could be placed upon this intelligence. "Marseilles was the only city where it was certain that anything like enthusiasm has been manifested in the royal cause." In the meantime addresses flowed in from different municipalities and different corps. Only, it was significant that there were none from any corps likely to act against the invader.

A "friend of the present Government" informed Crawford that no real reliance was to be placed on the garrison of Paris; that "when the barracks are visited by the Bourbon Princes the soldiers say to each other, 'Let us cry *Vive le Roi!*'" but that "as soon as the Princes have left them they look at each other and laugh."

Nothing could better illustrate the cynicism and caprice of the troops generally.

"The apprehension of a popular commotion has been so strong that cannon has been carried into the Palace. The National Guards and the *gens d'armes* disperse all collections

or groups of people, whether ambulating or standing in the streets or public places.

" The King goes this day to the Chamber of Deputies to hold a royal session. I presume it is intended to excite a popular feeling against the invader. The course which the Government has pursued will render it extremely difficult to produce any strong sensation amongst the people. The sovereign who presumes in the nineteenth century to reign by divine right must not expect any enthusiasm in the support of his pretensions."

The dictum seemed plausible enough: how was an American Minister at the Bourbon Court in 1815 to anticipate the Germany of William II and its thirty years' autocracy by virtue of this same " divine right " ?

On the 19th he reports :

" The legislative bodies are making great exertions to rouse the nation for defence of the Government. The approach of Napoleon will hardly allow them time. He was yesterday morning at Auxerre. It is currently reported that Marshals Ney and Oudinot have returned to Paris.

" The *Moniteur* suggests that Ministry should be confided to other hands. The answer of the King is certainly equivocal; but a writer of the name of Benjamin Constant in the *Journal des Débats* takes it for granted that the Ministry will be changed and that the patriots of 1790 will be called to administer the Government.

" Severe strictures have been passed upon all the Ministers except the Minister of War, but Chancellor d'Ambray was the principal object of invective.

" If the Emperor is not defeated or compelled to halt or change his route he will probably reach Paris to-morrow or next day."

Crawford conjures up a curious picture of Napoleon's jeopardy.

" Three or four days will determine the fate of Paris. If he does not enter in that time it is highly improbable that he will ever enter it, unless he should be led through the streets as a prisoner. This is highly improbable, first because he will hardly suffer himself to be taken, and secondly, if taken, would be immediately despatched, pursuant to the proclamation of the King."

But no such violent end was reserved for the great soldier now returning in a blaze of glory to his former capital.

Even as Crawford penned this letter the King and royal family were fleeing, and on the following day (March 20) James Gallatin could write :

" The Emperor arrived this evening ; most of the imperial family were at the Tuileries to greet him. All day the greatest confusion—officers and their staff, couriers, messengers, etc., galloping wildly about the streets. Great carts of baggage and furniture. It is very amusing ; most of the shops are closed, the cafés crammed, chairs even put out in the streets. Orators standing on tables making speeches ; roars of ' *Vive l'Empereur*,' ' *Vive le petit Caporal.*' I don't know if it is genuine or not, the French are so excitable. The American Minister sent the Stars and Stripes for father to hang on the balcony, for protection in case of trouble. I saw the Emperor arrive, thousands and thousands cheering him. People seem mad with joy. What turncoats the French are ! "

It is to be feared that Gallatin, *père*, was less pleased than his friend Crawford at the return of the Emperor. For it was well known that Gallatin was favourable to the Bourbons and it had also been currently reported that he would be the next American Minister to the Bourbon Court.

Before these totally unexpected happenings, Crawford had demanded his recall and was preparing to leave Paris. He now found himself once more, almost alone of the diplomatic corps, the representative of a Power not at war with Napoleon and yet at peace with England. Suppose Napoleon were to remain, what might he not now be induced to perform for American friendship ? Crawford began to regret his impending departure. Both Gallatin and Bayard were pressing him to follow them to London in connection with the final stages of the new commercial treaty with England. He would like to have witnessed the final issue of these events in France. He lingered as long as he could. He called on Napoleon's new Foreign Minister and reported (April 15) :

" In the interview which I had with the Duke of Vicenza on the 3rd instant he appeared confident that the Allied Powers would not renew the war with France. He said that before the Ministers of the Allied Powers had left Paris he

had seen them and assured them respectively of the determination of the Emperor to execute with good faith the Treaty of Paris. That all the measures which the Sovereigns then assembled at Vienna had taken manifestly proceeded from the supposition that a civil war at least would ensue in France and that the adherents of the Bourbons would be able to make a decided stand in some part of the Kingdom. (When they found out their mistake they would abandon a family abandoned by the French nation on account of the folly and imbecility of their measures !) He thought it would be impracticable to unite all the Powers in the crusade against France and that they would not dare to attack the French nation with the Emperor at its head.

" I told him [pursues Crawford] that war was inevitable if England was able to induce the principal continental Powers to engage in it, and that she would succeed if her subsidies were big enough. The duke agreed, but did not think England could pay, as her finances were greatly embarrassed and her people might refuse the sacrifices."

Then comes a charge of Bourbon unfriendliness to America.

" He said that the Emperor deeply regretted the situation in which his abdication left the United States, that the circumstances under which that act had been performed were entirely beyond his control ; that the cause of the United States was so manifestly that of France and of every maritime State that it was astonishing that France, under any Government, could have been an indifferent spectator of the contest. He added that the archives of his office furnished conclusive evidence that the Royal Government balanced some time between a state of neutrality and an active participation in the war against the United States. The conduct of the Royal Government, he said, was not more astonishing than their conduct to France itself. The King was nothing more than a viceroy of the Prince Regent of England. After neutrality had been decided upon, he said, the instructions given to the maritime prefects were to favour the English in every case as far as it was practicable, without committing a palpable violation of the laws of neutrality.

" The reason these instructions were not carried out was the strong public feeling in favour of the Americans and the tendency of the maritime prefects to counteract the pro-English policy of the Government. As evidence of this,

one of the prizes made by Commodore McDonough, upon entering a French port, was forced to leave it by the maritime prefect in twenty-four hours, although a terrible storm was raging."

And the Duke reminded Crawford that the *Decatur*, denied entry elsewhere, was allowed to stay at disaffected Nantes.

The American Minister's opinion was that if the impending war should last longer than a single campaign, the policy of Napoleon would be to encourage the commerce of the United States with France. In French eyes the Americans had gained much prestige by their conduct in the late war. He was strongly inclined to believe that the impending war against Napoleon would necessarily be short. "If the Allies fail to overrun France in the course of the first campaign they must be convinced of the impracticability of the enterprise. Peace is so necessary to France and the Emperor's counsellors are so pacific."

There was, of course, the alternative:

"If the allied forces should overwhelm the Emperor the war must terminate with his overthrow. In this event, the King, if restored, will, for his own security, consent that all the strong places of France shall be garrisoned by foreign troops. Between this measure and the extermination of the French Army there is no alternative."

It all depended, then, Crawford thought, on Napoleon.

"If he consults public opinion and gives a free constitution and acts under it in a manner to induce the nation to believe that he intends to execute it fairly the national enthusiasm cannot fail to be excited and the Allies will be successfully resisted.

"He can determine his own fate. It is possible that misfortunes may have subdued his ambition and prepared his mind to respect and to submit to the opinions of others, but ——"

Well, Minister Crawford was a cool and rational man. He professed no faith in miracles!

Just on the eve of leaving Paris (April 26) Crawford had an

interview with Count Otto, Napoleon's Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who told him that—

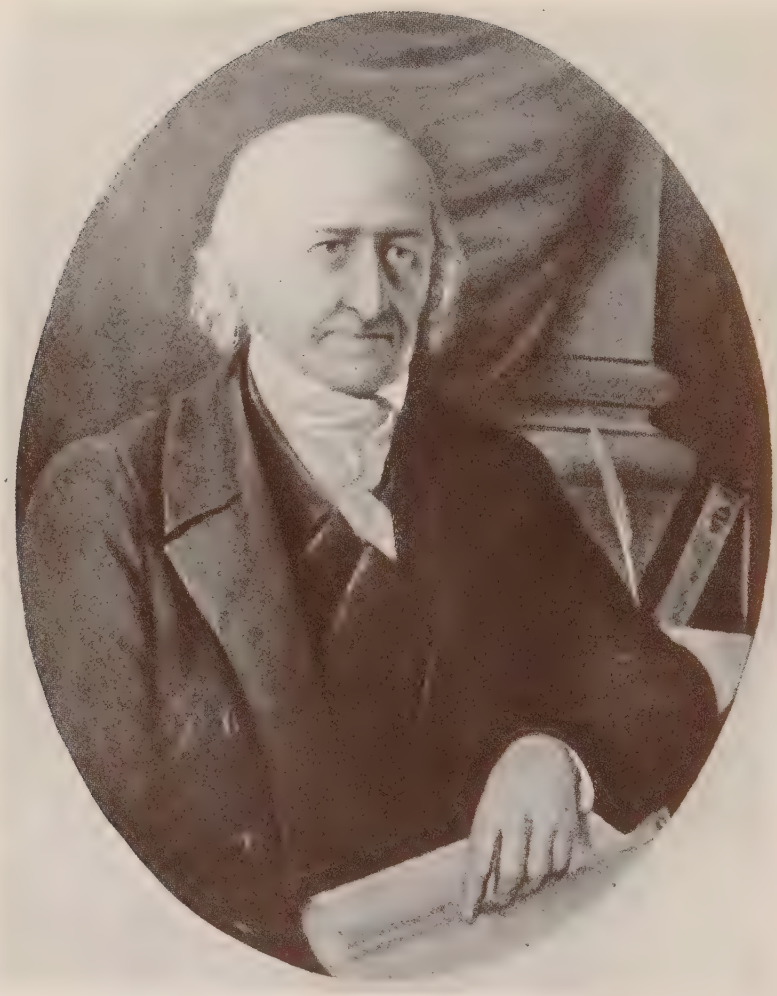
"In the stationary or declining state of French marine the Emperor wished by all the means in his power to add to the growth of the American Navy. It was now manifest, he said, whenever the naval preponderance of England should be reduced within reasonable limits, that the United States must be the principal Power in the struggle in which that desirable object should be effected."

These were excellent sentiments, but they came four years too late. They should have been expressed to Minister Joel Barlow.

Crawford left the American Legation when only a third of the famous Hundred Days had elapsed, and Waterloo was still two months away. But the Georgian statesman had had two turbulent and profitless years of the Napoleonic drama, and it was enough. If it had not killed him, as it had his predecessor, it had, as he pointed out, injured his health and depressed his spirits. He longed, if not for the comparative tranquillity of Washington, at least for the more familiar excitements of a political career amongst his own people.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Crawford became a Cabinet Minister and a candidate for the presidential nomination in 1816 and again in 1824. A stroke of paralysis in the latter year destroyed his chances at the last moment, and he died shortly afterwards.



ALBERT GALLATIN.

CHAPTER IX

GALLATIN (1816–23)

A FULL generation before Napoleon's final abdication, amongst the swarm of young foreigners who had frequented Dr. Franklin's ante-room at Passy were two young Swiss "having an inclination to see America," to whom the obliging Minister gave a letter to his son-in-law, Richard Bache in Philadelphia, recommending the pair to his "Civilities, Counsel and Countenance."

One of the youths was Albert Gallatin, aged nineteen, belonging to one of the most aristocratic families of Geneva, where he was born in 1761. So infected had this youth become with the ideas of Rousseau and Condorcet that when his grandmother informed him of her intention of placing him in the army of the Landgrave, whom he detested, he exclaimed with the fervour of the national hero, William Tell, "I will not serve a tyrant," broke with his family, and set out upon his travels.

America proved a favourable field for his talents. By the time Gallatin was forty he had attained the high position of American Secretary of the Treasury; a dozen years later, while still holding that office, he was chosen by President Madison one of the commissioners to negotiate a peace with Great Britain. The result, chiefly of his own tact and labours, was the Treaty of Ghent at the close of 1814.

This mission eventually involved, as we have seen, a visit to Paris in the early spring of 1815, when Gallatin was cordially received by the newly restored monarch, Louis XVIII, who intimated a wish that his visitor would eventually be sent as Minister to France, adding pleasantly, "You must not forget that your family belonged to France before you belonged to America."[1]

[1] Gallatin was a descendant of an old French family, one of whose members was an eminent courtier of Henry IV.

On this preliminary occasion Gallatin was accompanied by his son James, a comely young scapegrace who, though then seventeen, looked several years younger. "*Mais, c'est un bébé!*" was the remark of the Duchesse d'Angoulême when she saw him; but the other high-born ladies of Paris were inclined to accord the *joli petit Américain* privileges belonging to a somewhat greater maturity. As James was even then, as for years afterwards, serving as his father's secretary, and became regularly attached to the diplomatic staff, his adventures and opinions for the next five years belong incontestably to the history of the Legation. His début was a little shocking to American sensibilities at home. When, at the very outset, the famous painter David saw him he announced that his was the very figure he sought for an allegorical painting he was then meditating. Would Mr. Gallatin permit his charming son to pose to him? Highly flattered, the American envoy consented. The sittings were timed to begin on the morrow.

But the next day, March 4, Paris was, as we have seen, thrown into a state of great excitement. Napoleon had made his escape from Elba and in the midst of the general commotion David postponed the visit of the young American for a couple of days. When he came he informed him that he had designated him as the original of Cupid in what would be one of his finest works—"L'Amour et Psyche." It would therefore be necessary for him to pose in the nude. Young Gallatin, in nowise disconcerted, consented; but on expressing a natural curiosity as to the personality of Psyche, was informed, to his infinite disappointment, that the sittings of the pair would be separate. But even with this concession to propriety James was fain after several sittings to confide to his Diary: "I don't think father will approve of my picture Monsieur David is painting. . . . I have not seen the model, but would like to. She must be very pretty, only seventeen."

James Gallatin was entirely correct in his conjecture: his distinguished father, when he came to see it, although not condemning the picture (he had a special partiality for David's handiwork), highly objected to his son figuring before Europe in a guise that far too radically carried out his

friend Jefferson's and later his friend Secretary Marcy's ideas of sartorial simplicity in the American diplomatic service.

The Gallatins returned to America, when towards the close of the year the successful peace envoy was pressed by both Jefferson and Monroe to accept the French mission vacated by William Crawford. To the former Gallatin wrote (November 27, 1815):

"Under different circumstances, without having any wish for a foreign mission or a residence in France, I might have accepted the appointment of Minister there. But, satisfied that nothing can at this moment be effected in that country, and it being very reluctant to my feelings to be on a mission to a degraded monarch and to a nation under the yoke of foreign armies, I thought that I might, without any breach of public duty or private gratitude, consult my own convenience, and I have accordingly officially informed our Government that I decline altogether the appointment."[1]

Later he hesitated, telling Secretary Monroe:

". . . Was I to go to France, and my compensation and private income (this last does not exceed $2,500 a year) did not enable me to live as I ought, I must live as I can. I ask your forgiveness for entering in those details, but you have treated me as a friend and I write to you as such. . . . I believe, with you, that the chance of Congress making any additional allowance to Foreign Ministers is not the better on account either of the present incumbents or of the state of suspense in which some of the important missions are now kept. On what may hereafter be done no reliance can be placed. I calculate only on what now exists, and mean, as I before stated, to regulate my expense accordingly."

Thus, he eventually accepted the mission, but it was not until the following June that Gallatin, his wife and

[1] About this time, John Jacob Astor generously offered to take Gallatin into partnership with a fifth share in a business, whose profits were $100,000 a year. It is a curious revelation of Gallatin's aristocratic ideas (if his son is to be believed) that his reasons for refusing were, although he "respected Mr. Astor, he never could place himself on the same level with him. I am not surprised, as Astor, who was a butcher's son at Waldorf, came as an emigrant to this country with a pack on his back. He peddled furs, was very clever, and is, I believe, one of the kings of the fur trade. He dined here and ate his ice-cream and peas with a knife."—Diary of James Gallatin.

their two children, James and Frances (a pretty girl of fifteen), left American shores.

The new Minister's lady was, as Lord Bryce has remarked, "a typical American Protestant and highly estimable Southerner of that time." The granddaughter of Sir Francis Nicholson, formerly Governor of Maryland, her father was a distinguished naval officer, Commander Nicholson. Such a lady was not likely to countenance any laxity in morals or manners, whether they occurred at Baltimore or in Paris. This strait-lacedness on Mrs. Gallatin's part rather curtailed her full enjoyment of French society at first, and even limited her appearances at Court: for she refused to attend any of the state functions which took place on the Sabbath. It need hardly be said that Paris society received the American Minister's wife with a mixture of awe and curiosity or that she had her hands full in dealing with her far too lively son, James, whose affairs with pretty Frenchwomen quickly became both numerous and notorious.

By July 9, 1816, the Gallatins were in Paris, where Sheldon, the Chargé d'affaires, had long been awaiting them. In the course of an interview which the new envoy had the very next day with the Duc de Richelieu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the duke "regretted that the newspapers both in England and America should so misrepresent the present Government in France and attempt to defend that of Napoleon, who had crushed liberty everywhere." Gallatin, who had spoken of Louis XVIII as a degraded monarch, heartily joined in these regrets, and thought that the Bourbons should be given every chance to rule wisely.

On the following day, accompanied by Sheldon and his son, as secretary, the Minister was received by the King and his brother, the Comte d'Artois. Young Gallatin notes:

"The King is old and very fat. . . . Very great etiquette is maintained. They say the King is more strict than even Louis XIV was. We cut a sorry sight in our plain black coats and breeches, with all the splendours of the Court uniforms."

But the "plain black coats and breeches" era was not to be of long duration.

After a fortnight in an hotel, the Gallatins found a suitable residence at 21 rue de l'Université,[1] the very street in which Franklin and Deane had lodged forty years before.

"The house [James records] is really very fine *entre cour et jardin*. Furniture old, but very good. We have to supply our own plate and linen. We have to make some alterations; so Mamma and Frances have gone to the Lussacs at Versailles."

To the young secretary's joy, to him was now assigned the pleasing task of engaging a domestic staff for the new Legation.

"I have been all day interviewing servants—tall and short, fat and thin—until I can hardly speak. After sorting out what I considered the best, I had them drawn up for father's approval, which I am glad to say he gave.

"Major-domo Callon by name, a very fine person; two house footmen, Édouard and Alfred; two carriage footmen, Louis and Jean; chef, Monsieur Ratifer, such a great personage (he brings his own kitchen staff); three maids, all pretty—I chose them. I don't know what mamma will say when she sees them. I hate to look at ugly women."

The elder Gallatin certainly appears to have reposed infinite confidence in the discretion of his spirited young son, who, given a free hand, made the most of all his privileges.

"I have," he writes, "my own valet, Lucine, aged twenty-five—a very important person he thinks himself, valet to a Secretary of Embassy. He will call me 'Excellence.'"

All this was pretty good going for the simple representatives of an austere and economical republic, but James has not yet completed his task. He writes (August 2):

"All the morning choosing carriages and horses. Of the latter we got two pairs, very fine, for the 'Berline,' which is all glass in front; this will be for court and state occasions. A very strong 'Brichka' for everyday use, a nice stout little pair for it. A cabriolet for me; any of the big horses will go in single."

[1] The hotel still exists, and is occupied by a department of the Ministry of Finance.

But more important affairs claim the time and the talents of the Minister. He opens up the question of the Indemnities due from France.

On August 6 he thus reports to Secretary Monroe :

" My abode here has been too short to enable me to form any opinion of the prospect we have of succeeding in obtaining the indemnities so justly due to our citizens, and I do not wish to enter into the discussion until I have ascertained as far as practicable the disposition of this Government in that respect. Whatever this may be, the situation of their finances will be a formidable obstacle in our way. That there will be a great deficit this and every succeeding year until the foreign contributions are discharged is notorious. The precise amount of that deficit for this year is not so well known, but, from a source entitled to confidence, has been stated to me as exceeding 350 millions of francs. It is not believed that any practical increase of taxes can produce more than 100 millions. The residue, or 250 millions a year for five years, must therefore remain unpaid, or be provided for by creating new stock. That situation would, indeed, be deplorable in a country where there is no public credit, and where the Treasury cannot raise money in any other manner than by selling their five per cent. stock at the market rate, which does not exceed fifty-eight per cent. I still hope that the statement is exaggerated ; but the reliance which seems to be placed on the forbearance of the allied Powers confirms the opinion that the internal resources are not sufficient to meet the foreign demands.

" It has been suggested to me that some classes of claims, particularly that of vessels burnt at sea, would, if pressed by themselves, have a better chance of being admitted ; but, unless otherwise instructed, I will not pursue a course which might injure the general mass of our claims. . . ."

Three days later the American Minister and his family made their appearance at Court. In the niceties of Bourbon etiquette they had been coached by their distant relative, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld d'Enville.

The Minister's wife, as her son tells us, was

" most graciously received. She had to wear full court dress at eleven in the morning. She was first received by the King, who spoke English to her, much to her relief.

When she retired from the presence she was escorted by Madame de Duras to the apartments of the Duchesse. She has not yet recovered from the fatigue, as she is not strong." [1]

Perhaps the poor lady was cheered by the arrival of a guest at the Legation in the person of her compatriot and fellow Baltimorean, Madame Patterson-Bonaparte, as the former wife of Napoleon's brother, Jérôme, was now known.

" Her baggage nearly filled the antechamber. She is very lovely, but hard in expression and manner. I don't think she has much heart. Her son seems to be her one thought; she is most ambitious for him. She even has a list of the different princesses who will be available for him to marry: as he is only ten years old, it is looking far ahead."

Madame was, however, a brilliant woman and lively company. When he heard she was staying at the Legation the King said to Gallatin:

" 'I hear that Madame Jérôme Bonaparte is with you. Pray express to her our regret she will not come to our Court, but that we know her reasons for not doing so.'

" When the lady was told she was much gratified, and said, 'That Corsican blackguard would not have been so gracious.'" [2]

When the Patterson-Bonapartes had gone there were times when poor Mrs. Gallatin felt very ill at ease. For instance, when they dined for the first time at the palace, the Comtesse

[1] What a severe trial the court ceremony was may be read in the Mémoires of the Comtesse de Boigne and the letters of the period.

[2] "She told us how she first met her husband, Jérôme Bonaparte. He had gone to America in command of a ship, arriving at Baltimore. He was invited to dine with an old Frenchman, the Marquis de Poleon, who had escaped with his family from St. Domingo during the massacre on that island; two of his children, with their nurses, were killed. On account of the troubled state of France, he had thought it wiser to go to America. All the beauties of Baltimore were invited to the dinner—the Catons, etc., etc. She was looking out of the window overlooking the drive with Monsieur de Poleon's eldest daughter. She continued: 'We saw two young men approaching the house. Mlle Pascault exclaimed, pointing to the taller one, "That man will be my husband." I answered, "Very well, I will marry the other one." Strangely enough, we both did as we had said. Henrietta Pascault married Reubell, son of one of the three directors, and I married Jérôme Bonaparte'; adding, 'Had I but waited, with my beauty and wit I would have married an English duke, instead of which I married a Corsican blackguard.'"—James Gallatin: *Diary*.

de Boigne, the well-known daughter of the French Minister to London, ventured to express her astonishment that people like the Gallatins should be made so much of at Court. Her remarks in the drawing-room after dinner were overheard by the Prince de Condé, who, turning upon the lady, said: "His Majesty cannot too highly honour Monsieur Gallatin, as, although representing a new country, his ancestors had served France for generations, and one had been a most honoured and intimate friend of Henry IV."

All this somehow reached the ears of the King, who was so annoyed that when Madame de Boigne made her curtsy it was made to the broad royal back. Next day, however, the offending lady called at the American Legation and behaved with the most condescending effusiveness. On this occasion Mrs. Gallatin was very much on her guard, for someone had told her that her visitor was the mistress of the exiled Duc d'Orléans. Also, Madame de Staël, who turned up about this time at the Legation, was very angry about the Comtesse de Boigne. "That woman," she said, "is effrontery itself. Truth never received an invitation to *her* christening." [1]

When the festive season approached the Legation became a scene of mighty merry-making. On Christmas Day the Gallatins gave a splendid supper to thirty-eight, including Madame de Staël and several dukes, with a choicely-laden Christmas-tree to follow. As the Russian Ambassador was cutting off some of the presents the tree caught fire, whereupon the Duc de Broglie (Madame de Staël's son-in-law) pulled off his coat, and, aided by the ever-ready James, smothered the flames. There really seemed to be always flames in Paris for James to smother. The dinner was pronounced a great success.

Yet Mrs. Gallatin found her new position very trying all the same. As her son wrote:

"Poor mamma is quite dazed, the whole system of living is so entirely different from that in America; this, coupled with her want of fluency in French, adds to her troubles."

[1] "That Comtesse de Boigne is irrepressible; she had the audacity to ask mamma at the Spanish Embassy last night if her jewels were real. I cannot understand a woman of her birth and education being so absolutely tactless."—*Diary*, February 10, 1823.

We already know of her refusal to attend the Court's Sunday parties. She had the full courage of her prejudices. Once, when she dined at the Spanish Embassy, the Papal Nuncio was present. On his arrival and departure he was preceded by two footmen walking backwards holding silver candelabra with lighted candles. When presented to Mrs. Gallatin the great dignitary held out his ring for her to kiss and looked astonished when she refused. The Minister rallied his wife on her refusal. "No such flummery for me!" she said.

At a later period her son remarks:

"I am very sorry for mamma; I can see she is not happy. Father is so occupied that I do not think he notices it. It is hard for her; she speaks so little French, has really no friends whom she cares for, and her position is a very difficult one. The Court is so hemmed in by etiquette to which she is not accustomed. She does not understand the ways of the Frenchwomen of the *grand monde*, and is continually shocked. Indeed, I am not surprised the only women she finds anything in common with are the ladies of the English Embassy and some of the English residents in Paris. There are few Americans, and those that are here are mostly in commerce and without education. I went with her two days ago to call on a Mrs. P., the wife of a very rich but common American. They have recently bought a very fine hotel in the rue de Varennes; they sold all the beautiful old furniture and have refurnished it in execrable taste, but she is evidently very proud of it and insisted upon showing us all the reception-rooms. In one room there was a large bronze replica of a statue by 'John of Bologna.' For something to say, I admired it. She folded her arms, and, with a palpable wink, said, 'Bologny done it, but I am going to have pantaloons made for it when I receive.' Mamma's face was a study. She relaxed into a smile when the poor woman offered her molasses, candy and dough-nuts, saying she made them herself to remind her of home."

But the French *chef* was not everything. The Minister's lady was delighted when she found out an old female negro cook in Paris, an escaped slave. She promptly engaged her, "simply to cook hominy, Maryland chicken, buckwheat cakes and waffles." Her son was in despair at the prospect;

he was already growing too fat. " If I eat much of this fare no whalebone belt will keep me in bounds and the great Alfred [the chef] will commit suicide."

The King was to give a further signal proof of his favour when, in the second week in January 1817, he visited the Gallatins in person. James Gallatin records (January 9):

" To our immense surprise, a court courier arrived this morning to say that his Majesty would in person call at 1.30. No time for any preparations. Father said, ' We will receive his Majesty in absolute simplicity, as behoves our republic.' He arrived with Monsieur in a very simple coach. Mamma, father, the children, and myself received him under the *perron* in the courtyard. He is very infirm—apologized for not getting out of the carriage. He handed mamma a large roll, which was a very fine engraving of himself. Written in English is ' To Madame Gallatin, with all the respect due to a woman who has principles. Signed, Louis.' He greatly admired Frances, who really promises to be very beautiful. Her complexion, like mamma's, is absolutely perfect. After much bowing, etc., etc., he drove off. It seems no such honour has ever been conferred by him before. Everybody tells father the King pays more attention to him than to anybody else. Comte de Gallatin, our cousin, the Minister from Würtemberg, says he is very jealous."

A year later, when the Gallatin jewels had arrived from Geneva—her husband's sole inheritance of all his grandmother's wealth—Mrs. Gallatin must have felt a thrill of satisfaction. Even her son, who was always so critical of her, writes:

" Last night a splendid ball at Court. Mamma was very fine: all Madame de Gallatin-Vaudenet's jewels—which were all poor father inherited from her; in fact, he had voluntarily paid all her immense debts—also some fine lace. Mamma's train was purple velvet with white lace. The diamonds are all mounted in Louis XV settings. One huge aigrette with briolet diamonds in her turban, which was of gold tissue. On her forehead a *ferronnière* of diamonds—beautiful brooches. Her dress was gold and purple striped tissue. The Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel gave Madame Gallatin-Vaudenet most of the jewels.

" The Duchesse d'Angoulême was regal in white, with a

train entirely of ermine. She was absolutely covered with jewels—pearls and diamonds. She is the most royal-looking personage one can possibly imagine. It was dreadfully crowded. All was over at midnight."

After several years of Paris her son wrote (1821):

"Mamma now, I think, loves these entertainments. She, like all women, loves dress. This gives her an opportunity to show off her finery."

Splendour in dress was not confined to the ladies of the Legation. The Gallatin liveries became the talk of Paris. James records in the early days of the mission that he has—

"Just been seeing the footmen, coachmen, etc., in their new liveries. For ordinary occasions, dark blue plush breeches, yellow waistcoats, and dark blue coats with silver buttons, black silk stockings; state liveries, light blue breeches, white silk stockings, yellow waistcoats, and light blue coats with broad silver braid and silver buttons. The latter is exact, as dark blue does not exist in heraldry. Father is a little doubtful, fearing Americans may object to so much show; but he feels the Court of France requires it." [1]

The Gallatins were, of course, well acquainted with Lafayette, who, despite the ban upon his movements, frequently came up from his country seat, La Grange, to dine and sleep in the rue de l'Université. Once the Minister gave a dinner-party at which Baron Humboldt, Laplace, Madame de Staël, Pozzo di Borgo, and the de Broglies arrived. All were assembled in the drawing-room, and Laplace was speaking when the Marquis de Lafayette was announced. Laplace instantly turned pale and withdrew into a corner. When dinner was announced he sought his host and begged to retire, as he felt ill. It appeared that he found it impossible to sit at the same board with Lafayette on account of his attitude to the Bourbons! Madame de Staël was highly amused, and the joviality of the company was not lessened by the defection of the illustrious astronomer.

Lafayette's movements were occasionally enveloped in much mystery. For instance, on one occasion in 1822 he arrived at the Legation, requesting the Minister to put him

[1] *Diary.*

up for a few days. The Minister agreed with pleasure, and the Marquis with his baggage, which consisted of a large roll of green canvas tied with a thick cord, was shown to a chamber. Here he passed several days reading and writing, going out only at night. It seemed to the watchful James that he was "plotting something." After a stay of some twelve days Lafayette departed hurriedly, and the same evening "two mysterious, noisy men" sent in a note to Gallatin. He received them alone: what transpired was never known, but he seemed greatly annoyed. The next day the Minister sent a servant out to try and get Lafayette's address, evidently wishing "to warn him of some impending danger." Again and again he begged Lafayette to put an end to this perpetual and futile plotting.

It was not perhaps to be expected that, as time went on, Gallatin's style of living and his penchant for the aristocracy would escape without criticism in America. But it was not until the close of 1820 that the Secretary of State felt obliged to mention that a certain member of Congress had openly asserted that the American Minister's house was too large, his servants' liveries too showy and his company far too aristocratic. Gallatin was, as his son again and again protests, "simplicity itself"; but he felt he ought to keep up "a certain style" in a country where such things were esteemed: it was due to the prestige of the country he represented. He consulted Lafayette, who was republican enough in his ideas, and then returned a dignified answer to Washington, requesting to be recalled if his manner of living was considered improper, but he did not propose to change it.

The President was too pleased to have the services of such a man as Gallatin to listen to the carpers and cavillers, and the Minister was forthwith reassured.

Frequently, the Legation was enlivened by the visits of Americans of a certain class, sometimes even members of the National and State Legislatures, who proceeded to "liven up things" for their representative. But it is to be feared that Gallatin was what would to-day be called a "bad mixer," and the loud voices and peculiar personal habits of some of his western callers depressed him. They complained bitterly that he was "not American enough." Once there

was a scene, and some of General Jackson's political constituents had to be hustled forcibly off the premises.

"Some most extraordinary Americans called" records the Secretary (February 7, 1822):

"The rule is for them simply to write their names and addresses, but they insisted upon seeing Father. He received them with great civility, but the moment they commenced to speak I gauged what sort of people they were. They did not request father to present them at Court, but absolutely demanded it as a right. Now, he has made it a rule not to present anybody unless they hold some distinguished position in their own country. These people were absolutely impossible. Father quietly but firmly said, 'I regret not being able to present you.' They demanded the reason why, in the most insolent manner. Father rang the bell, and when the footman appeared simply said, 'Show these gentlemen to the door.' They commenced to use the most disgraceful language. I, with the help of Mr. Sheldon, insisted upon their leaving. Father, with a bow, left the room by another door. It is really dreadful he should be subjected to such indignity. He has now given an order that in future nobody is to be ushered into his presence without first being interviewed by Mr. Sheldon or myself."

In the midst of all Gallatin's social activities and throughout the whole period of his mission there was much diplomatic business to be transacted, rendered, however, very difficult by the unsettled state of the country, the many domestic events and the instability of tenure of the Ministers. Gallatin often felt that he was for long periods "idling his time," and, even when certain matters such as the Treaty of Commerce ceased to be dormant, the complications which immediately rose were as vexatious a waste of time as the previous neglect.

When the Spanish American Colonies revolted in 1819 Gallatin thought it

"of the greatest importance that no European Power should interfere in the quarrel. He feels he must be continually on the alert and keep himself informed on all matters concerning the subject. He also feels it of great importance that the United States should recognize the South American

Republics. On this subject he has sent a private note to all the European Powers to prepare them for the action to be taken by his Government so that it will not come as a surprise to them. The Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle is now sitting. Its policy with regard to the United States is very favourable. Spain finds herself isolated by the Powers and is treating with father, or at least through him, for the sale of Florida. I have to give up all gaieties at present, as it is a serious matter, and all private notes are drafted by me before being despatched to the Secretary of State. Spain has refused to ratify the treaty."[1]

Then in February 1820 came the assassination of the Duc de Berri at the opera, which brought about the fall of the Decazes Ministry.

"What a catastrophe!" cried Gallatin when he heard of the tragedy. "The unfortunate Bourbons—a blow for France indeed!"

Three days later he and all the foreign Ambassadors and Ministers assembled at the Tuileries to present their condolences.

"The large *salle* was in total darkness, with the exception of about twenty large candles [*siegés*] in great silver candlesticks. In order of seniority, first the Ambassadors and their suites, then the Ministers, passed before the throne, in front of which was standing the Duc d'Angoulême surrounded by the high court officials in the deepest mourning. Absolute silence with the exception of the announcement by the Grand Chamberlain as the representative of each country passed—La Russie, l'Espagne, etc., followed by the dropping on the floor of the halberds with a ringing sound. It was most solemn and impressionable. The Duke bowed to each one. Not a word was spoken. So we passed out."

About the middle of June 1821 Gallatin applied to the Duc de Bassano for a certain document in the Foreign Office archives. When the messenger arrived it was found that another and secret document had been sent by mistake—one of the highest importance—whose existence, the reader may remember, had been questioned by both Great Britain

[1] *Ibid.* The very next day James Gallatin records: "There has been a new revolution in Spain and a complete change in the Government. They have ratified the treaty, much to Father's satisfaction."

and America. It was nothing less than a copy of the Trianon Decree, dated August 5, 1810, revoking Napoleon's previous decrees of Berlin and Milan. Had it been conveyed to General Armstrong, the American Minister of the period, it would have altered the whole aspect of current international relations and averted the subsequent war with Britain. No wonder this singular discovery evoked Gallatin's indignation! As he wrote Secretary J. Q. Adams (September 15, 1821):

"It bears date the same day on which it was officially communicated to our Minister that the Berlin and Milan Decrees would be revoked on the first day of the ensuing November; and no one can suppose that if it had been communicated or published at the same time the United States would, with respect to the promised revocation of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, have taken that ground which ultimately led to the war with Great Britain. It is indeed unnecessary to comment on such a glaring act of combined injustice, bad faith and meanness as the enacting and concealment of that decree exhibits; and I cannot suppose that it will ever be brought forward by this Government for the purpose of repelling our claims to indemnity, especially as the grounds assumed for the measure are evidently mere pretences and altogether untenable. Yet, when I first conversed in 1816 with the Duc de Richelieu on the subject of our claims, he alluded to a statement prepared in his bureau for him, in which the Act of Congress of March 1809 was mentioned as having afforded cause for reprisals."

Clearly it had been Napoleon's wish to do "all in his power to crush a young and rising nation." Gallatin went immediately to see the Duc de Bassano, but on arriving found the Foreign Minister utterly crushed by the news which had arrived of the death of his old master, the Ex-Emperor himself, at St. Helena. As Bassano knew nothing of the disclosure of the document so long and wilfully withheld, Gallatin did not wish to add to his unhappiness, so was silent.

At the beginning of 1822 his old friend and diplomatic predecessor, Crawford, then a presidential candidate, wished Gallatin to use his influence to secure the Pennsylvanian

vote and urged him to return to America. But the President wished the Minister to remain in Paris, and, as Crawford's chances of obtaining the nomination seemed but slight, Gallatin remained. Just then, too, a further handsome offer was made to him by John Jacob Astor to become head of the United States Bank, which the Minister also declined.

On February 13 his son records :

" Father had a private audience of the King to-day. I accompanied him, as I always do. To our amazement, when we were ushered into the presence, Madame de Cayla was present and did not retire ; she seems to hold absolute sway over him. He actually appealed to her for her opinion on matters political which she certainly had no knowledge of.

" Driving home father expressed his disgust, and said it was high time he abdicated if he was governed by a woman. It has always been the same thing with the Bourbons ; in their old age some intriguing woman has governed them."

In May the matter of the Navigation Laws with America came up in the Chamber, but the result was very unsatisfactory. " M. de Chateaubriand," wrote Gallatin, " seems to ignore everything. He has not even answered our notes lately : it is really most exasperating. Nearly six years wasted."

Before the year was out M. de Montmorency, who had succeeded Chateaubriand, resigned, and M. de Villèle took his place. These continual changes brought the American indemnity negotiations to a standstill and Montmorency's pledges to Gallatin proved worthless. This brought forth a protest from the American Minister. He was " disgusted with the childish behaviour of the French Ministry."

It seemed, indeed, a waste of time to go on as things then were, and in the spring of 1823 he wrote home applying for six months' leave of absence. In April Gallatin had a farewell audience of Louis XVIII, who, as it happened, had only a year more to live.

" The King seemed overcome, expressed deep regret at parting with Father. Mamma and Frances were then admitted and took a formal farewell of him. Both Monsieur and the Duc d'Angoulême accompanied Father and mamma to the

door of the antechamber and expressed a wish that they would return to Paris. The Duc d'Aumont then escorted us to the apartments of the Duchesse d'Angoulême. Half-way he handed us over to the care of the Duchesse de Serent and the Vicomte de Montmorency. Mamma and Frances were received first—after they retired, Father and myself were introduced. The Duchesse was most unbending and expressed regret, but the hope of seeing Father again. She handed him a sealed packet, begging him to take great care of it. We then retired and to our amazement found a royal carriage had been ordered to take us home ; a second one followed with a gentleman and a lady of the Court. This was a very great compliment—as it was only an informal leave-taking. To-morrow we go to the Palais Royal to take leave."

The packet thus entrusted to the American Minister turned out to contain copies of letters addressed to the daughter of Louis XVI from persons in America who either imagined they were her brother, the Dauphin, or had had that royal child in their custody. Accompanying the packet was a note from the Duchess, begging Gallatin to investigate, if he could, these claims, it being the great wish of her life to ascertain if Louis XVII still lived or had ever escaped from his captors and reached America.

The retiring envoy promised ; but all his efforts were unable to disperse the great Dauphin myth, which persists in some quarters of America even to this day.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

After Gallatin's return from Europe he settled in New York for the rest of his long life. For some years he was President of the National Bank in New York. He was interested in public education and science, especially ethnology, as well as in finance, and was one of the founders of New York University. He repeatedly declined public office, and died in 1849.

CHAPTER X

BROWN AND RIVES (1824–32)

"THE period from the Treaty of Ghent to the inauguration of Jackson," remarks a recent American writer, "is notable for the continuity and the brilliancy of our diplomatic service." [1]

While this is true, most of the officials who served as Secretaries of Legation in foreign capitals never rose very high, nor remained very long in the service, and are now utterly forgotten,[2] but amongst them few displayed greater tact and ability than the young diplomat Minister Gallatin left behind him as Chargé d'affaires, David Sheldon. It is true, Sheldon had the inestimable advantage of serving for eight years under a man of birth, distinction and intellect, fitted to grace any European company; but Sheldon's own personal qualities and his mastery of the forms of diplomacy and of good society made him very acceptable in all circles.

Yet sometimes, despite his affable manner, he found himself a little out of touch with his own countrymen visiting the French capital, one of whom thought Sheldon would be all the better "for a spell of republican simplicity and plain American living."

Sheldon was on the friendliest terms with the British Ambassador, Sir Charles Stuart, the grandson of George III's Prime Minister, Lord Bute, although the American rather regretted that this wayward personage should devote so much of his time to the *ballerinas* and *figurantes* of the opera.[3]

It was about this period that both the British and American Governments were making a renewed effort to suppress the

[1] C. R. Fish: *American Diplomacy.*

[2] Washington Irving was, of course, Secretary of Legation in London; but that was in Jackson's day.

[3] *Cf.* Beckles Willson: *The Paris Embassy.*

African slave trade, only to find their way continually blocked by France. In his message of April 1822 President Monroe had said :

" France has incurred the reproach of being the greatest adventurer in this traffic, prohibited by her laws ; but it is presumed that this results not so much from the avidity of her subjects for this iniquitous gain, as from the safety which, in the absence of all hazard of capture, her flag affords to the greedy and unprincipled adventurers of all nations."

This was strong language, but Monroe was careful to observe that he did not impute these crimes to " so gallant and high-minded a people " as the French, but only to the laxity of the French laws. All nations must combine to suppress the evil, and particularly France.

Naturally the British welcomed American co-operation ; but so far, Stuart, like his predecessor, the Duke of Wellington, had been able to make little impression on Louis XVIII and his Ministers. On August 11, 1823, Sheldon wrote to the British Ambassador :

" Mr. Sheldon has the honour to present his best respects to Sir Charles Stuart and to return to him with his thanks for their perusal the papers laid before Parliament relating to the Slave Trade which Sir Charles was so good as to send to him ; he is sorry to find from them that so much still remains to be done to produce the effectual abolition of this traffic. What most discourages the efforts everywhere made to this end is the reflection how little the purposes of humanity will be actually attained as long as thirty or forty thousand of these miserable beings shall continue annually to be received from the opposite continent in Brazil. Whether they are from the north or the south of the line or from the western or the eastern coast of Africa, this result is not the less deplorable or the less disheartening."

Much, then, as the President wished for the abolition of the slave trade, and fully as he was supported by Congress, he and the British Ministry were powerless without France, where, as the King told Wellington, public opinion was not yet ripe for the enforcement of the law. And, indeed, the matter hung fire for years until at length in Louis Philippe's

reign a French Ministry took their courage in both hands and subscribed to an international treaty.

Sheldon had not long been left in charge of the Legation when a very important international matter arose—with which, from his insufficient rank and limited powers, he had great difficulty in dealing. Here again Sir Charles Stuart came to his support. For Britain and America—thanks to George Canning—were agreed as regards the immediate future of South America and the revolted Spanish colonies on that continent. France, however, showed a tendency to take the side of Spain :

" I was informed," writes the Chargé d'affaires (Oct. 23, 1823), " by the British Ambassador that he had conferred with the French Ministers (Chateaubriand and de Villèle) on the subject of the Spanish American colonies. He told me that his object had been to prevent them from engaging hastily in any measure relating to those colonies, and that he had insisted that whatever measures were taken should be adopted in common, and after consultation of Powers really interested in the question, which were England, France and the United States alone, the interests of the great continental Powers of Europe being at this particular point only of a secondary nature. The French Ministers assured him that they would undertake nothing by themselves.

" The motive for this course is obvious enough ; the United States having acknowledged the independence of the colonies, they cannot be expected to concur in an assent to any measures not having that result for its basis. They (the French) will not go too far. It is difficult to conceive that England will consent to any plan which would again place the colonies under the dominion of Spain."

Nevertheless, the action of the United States was not agreeable to the Powers, and Sheldon sadly reported (January 12, 1824) to the Secretary, J. Q. Adams, that " in Ministerial circles there is great reserve towards me."

Sheldon, while awaiting the arrival of a new American Minister to France, continued vigilant concerning French action and opinion concerning Spain and Spanish-American affairs. When the Spanish King, as a great condescension,

saw fit to grant liberty of commerce to his revolting colonies, the measure was cried up in the French press, as if it removed all the colonial grievances. But Sheldon saw its futility and so told Chateaubriand. It was the latter's introduction to the "Monroe Doctrine." Only *force majeure* was now of any use to Spain, and force could not be employed without encountering the opposition of England and the United States. Consequently, the French Government was not likely to recommend it, however much they wished to help Spain.

All this time, too, Sheldon was continually pressing the Ministry about the long-outstanding American spoliation claims and trying to satisfy his countrymen, collectively and individually, on that head. It was hard to work. He was denied even access to the French records. To one aggrieved American shipowner who came to Paris (March 22, 1824) he wrote :

"As to the records of the Council of Prizes or any other records under the control of the French Government, nothing can be obtained from them. That Government persists in refusing to give any papers or even to permit any researches to be made for them, or for information of any kind relating to the capture or condemnation of American vessels or property. A long correspondence upon this subject has lately taken place, but it has produced no favourable result."

He could not but be relieved to hear that his new chief had at last arrived at Cherbourg (March 21).

In naming James Brown of Louisiana as Gallatin's successor President Monroe had a special object in view. France was bent on making a fantastic counter-claim with respect to Louisiana, and Brown was in an excellent position to rebut it. Moreover, the Creoles in New Orleans were in touch with the Spanish Americans now in process of revolt and an envoy from Louisiana would serve to remind the French Court of the interest of the United States in that conflict. Brown himself was a member of the Senate; he seems to have been a man of sense and he enjoyed the confidence of Secretary Adams, himself shortly to be elevated to the Presidency.

The new Minister was accompanied by Mrs. Brown, a plain, shy, retiring lady in indifferent health, who was much annoyed to find herself pointed out in various parties as *the* Mrs. Brown. "I could not at first at all understand what they meant," she afterwards told her friend, Mrs. Livingston. "I could hardly believe that either myself or my husband were so celebrated as to cause people to stare and crane their necks so and regard *me* in such a curious way." It afterwards appeared that the simple French had somehow got the idea that she was the then notorious Mrs. Brown, the morganatic English wife of the Duc de Berri, heir to the throne, who had been assassinated four or five years before. That lady had been well provided for by the Government, and although the marriage was annulled by the Pope, her two daughters by the Duke were legitimized.[1]

Three days after his presentation, on April 13, to the aged and now fast-failing monarch, Minister Brown reported to Washington concerning the chief topic of the day—the affairs of Spain:

"It is very difficult to imagine how any country can be more wretched than Spain is at this time, without money or the means of raising it by loans or taxes; without any army on which she can rely and without the material from which to compose one; confidence, as well public as private, at an end; such, if we may credit the public journals, is the state of that distracted country. The King continued to reject the advice of the Government, and wished at all hazards to recover her distant colonies."

Particularly charged with a special piece of business, the American envoy lost little time in bringing it before the French Minister, Chateaubriand. On April 28 he wrote to the latter:

"It is well known to your Excellency that my immediate predecessor, Mr. Gallatin, during several years, made repeated and urgent applications to His Majesty's Government for the adjustment of claims to a very large amount, affecting the interest of American citizens and originating in gross violations

[1] Mrs. Brown (de Berri) lived to a great age, dying as late as 1876.

of the law of nations and of the rights of the United States; and that he never could obtain from France either the settlement of those claims or even an examination and discussion of their validity. To numerous letters addressed by him to H.M. Ministers on that subject either no answers were given or answers which had for their only object to postpone the investigation of the subject. Whilst, however, he indulged the hope that these delays would be abandoned and that the rights of our citizens which had been urged for so many years would at length be taken up for examination, he learned, with surprise and regret, that His Majesty's Government had determined to insist that they should be discussed in connection with the question of the construction of the 8th Article of the Louisiana Treaty of Cession. Against this determination he strongly but ineffectually remonstrated in a letter to Monsieur de Villèle dated the 12th November, 1822.

"It was notorious [Mr. Brown proceeded] that the United States Government had been quite ready to discuss this aspect of the Louisiana Treaty; but it had proved, after investigation, to be 'destitute of any solid foundation and wholly inadmissible.' Consequently, there could be no connection between the two subjects."

There was another question on the *tapis*. Nelson, appointed American Minister to Spain, had, in the previous summer, been refused admission to that country by the Spanish naval and military authorities, and had gone home in high dudgeon. Brown was instructed to protest against this treatment to the French Court and to demand reparation for the affront. He was told that Spain was in the throes of civil war and that the American Minister could not expect to enter the country without considerable difficulty. "Yes," objected Brown, "but the British envoy has got in and been received." "True," replied Chateaubriand, "and the American envoy ought likewise to have persisted." "What, sir, at the risk of his life?" enquired Brown, who pointed out that Nelson had been everywhere treated offensively. The French Foreign Minister endeavoured to explain that America was not very popular in Spain just then and could hardly expect to be. He would suggest an apology to the Spanish Government; but nothing very much could reasonably be hoped for until peace dawned in the peninsula.

On May 28 the Minister reported from Paris :

" I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the British Government in its expressions in favour of the independence of the new American States. They will in all probability wish that these States should establish monarchical governments, and, indeed, I believe all the influence which the Government and its agents can exert will be employed to induce them to prefer that form of government. It is not improbable that the return of Iturbide to Mexico may have been viewed favourably, as tending to promote the establishment of systems at variance with the wishes of the Governments founded on popular principles.

" It is to be hoped, however, that as his departure was anticipated by agents of the Government of Mexico, who undoubtedly warned the Congress of his intentions, he may be a second time defeated in the guilty project of sacrificing the liberty of his country to his personal aggrandizement."

On June 22, 1824, Brown had an interview with Count de Villèle, the new Foreign Minister, concerning the slave trade.

" I stated to him the measures which had been adopted by Congress for the abolition of the slave trade. I represented to him the beneficial effect of these measures in having, so far as respected the citizens of the United States, put an end to that disgraceful traffic, and expressed the desire felt by my Government that, by the consent of all civilized nations, the crime of engaging in the slave trade should be denounced as piracy and capitally punished."

Villèle agreed that the slave trade had ceased to be profitable to France, owing to the low price of colonial produce, that the Government considered it an infamous traffic ; but that public opinion in France must be consulted, and that the engagement to put an end to the slave trade had been contracted at a time and under humiliating circumstances, and that the French resented dictation by any foreign Power. Besides, while threat of capital punishment might answer in Great Britain and the United States, it was too severe for France, and not workable.

" I told him that the mere threat had answered with us, and that the trade had been abandoned as infamous."

Villèle said that only slave-ships from Nantes were now going out, and these would be stopped. He feared anything more would be futile.

The Foreign Minister said afterwards that France would not yield to the combined influence of Great Britain and the United States. The French press were against it. "I hope," he added, "that these feelings will yield, and that the cause of justice and humanity will prevail in France, as it has already done in Great Britain and the United States."

It was Brown's opinion that the condition of Spain and Portugal was the best security against any plan of armed intervention in the South American question.

"The wish [he wrote] of the great Continental Powers to subject the new States to the rule of Spain is probably as strong as it has ever been. But the mother-countries have now so little to offer the Colonies in exchange for their independence that the prospect of persuading them to voluntary submission and of reducing them to obedience without the employment of a considerable force is less promising than ever. The Government of Spain is without organization, her army reduced to a few regiments badly paid, her navy annihilated and her finances exhausted. . . . The presence of the French troops alone prevents excesses."

Great distress prevailed in Spain and there was no prospect of a sufficient force being raised.

In Portugal affairs were even worse. Its King had called upon England for six thousand troops to protect him.

"It is apprehended that the influence of England, which had almost disappeared in continental affairs, is gaining as well in Spain as in Portugal. These jealousies may have an influence on the councils of Europe and favour the independence of the South American Colonies by exempting them from an immediate attack from the combined Powers." [1]

In one of his letters Brown reviews the conditions in Germany and the continental situation generally in the third decade of the nineteenth century.

"The state of the finances of most continental Governments will prevent any disturbance of the peace, or any pro-

[1] Letter-book: Despatch, July 12, 1824.

pensity to meddle by force in the American contest. The French five-per-cents, which had risen to 106, are now fallen to 98; consequently [he argued] no interruption of the revolutionary struggle in South America was to be feared.

"Although the policy of the British Government has not been so frank and decided as I had hoped it would have been, yet I have every reason to believe that it will continue to oppose its whole influence to any attack upon the independence of the new States and will persevere in refusing to make a part of any Congress held for that purpose. The delay in acknowledging their independence in a formal manner is attributed to a division in the Ministry."

On another occasion the American Minister had a lengthy talk about Mexico with M. de Villèle. The latter thought that King Ferdinand's brother would have been wise if he had gone out to Mexico and offered it independence as the condition of giving him the crown. "I asked," reported the Minister, "whether the result of the experiment made by France to restore order in Spain encouraged a similar attempt on our own Continent."

When Chateaubriand was forced out of the French Ministry, Brown heard many complaints on the part of his friends who were doing their best to undermine Villèle. But the latter was backed by a strong majority, and was able to defend his measures.

In September 1824 came the death of the old King Louis XVIII and a period of court mourning ensued, during which the American Minister put his carriage and servants into black. During that winter Brown's own health began to be affected and he was often laid up at the Legation with rheumatism. To make matters worse, Mrs. Brown was also often ailing and went out little in society, although when Lady Granville came to the British Embassy that sprightly Ambassadress did her best to be agreeable to the American Minister's lady. Under all the circumstances, they had reason to be grateful for the industry and good-temper of the First Secretary, Sheldon, who laboured, as usual, indefatigably.

When Brown was finally able to have a first interview with Baron Damas he found, to his chagrin, that nothing at

all had been done about the American claims (he had no answer to his long and formal letter) and that there was still a disposition to tack on to the American demand the 8th Article of the Louisiana Treaty, notwithstanding Brown's reiterated protests that there was no reasonable connection between the two. The poor man was in despair.

As spring approached a splendid ceremonial event loomed upon the horizon. Nothing was talked of in Paris—even amongst the American colony—save the coronation at Reims of the new King Charles X.

"Preparations are making [wrote the Minister, Feb. 12, 1825] to impart to it an unusual degree of pomp and splendour. It is understood that the diplomatic corps will be invited and the expense of travelling thirty to forty leagues to Reims—a small town where the price of everything will be enhanced by the crowd of strangers—will be considerable. It can hardly be expected that the Minister of the United States should subject himself personally to this extraordinary and heavy expense. The charges to which I was subjected in consequence of the late King's death, although considerable, have not been carried to my account with the Government."

But this coronation was a different matter. To the Secretary of State Brown wrote privately (March 21):

"I mentioned that I should probably be invited to attend the ceremony at Reims and enquired of you whether in that event the expenses would be allowed. . . . The terms in which I have been invited and the assurance I have received that all the members of the diplomatic corps would attend, seemed to make it a duty on my part to accept the invitation. To have refused would have given offence, and I did not wish to incur the censure of giving room for any unfriendly feeling of the part of the Government in order to avoid some expense to my country and some personal inconvenience to myself. It is my intention to make the expenses as moderate as is consistent with a decent appearance, and I shall for that purpose conform my style with that of other Ministers of my rank. The expense is not very great, but it is too much to be defrayed out of the small salary allowed to a Minister and I hope it will not be refused."

Henry Clay, now Secretary of State, had no intention of

refusing it. He and the leading senators at home only hoped Minister Brown would cut a good figure at Reims, and enjoy himself. After all, the British Government, prompted by Canning, was sending over a special Coronation envoy and otherwise laying itself out to show its good-will towards Charles X, as were all the other Courts of Europe. It was held to be in the nature of a demonstration—a proof of Europe's acquiescence in a return to ceremonial feudalism and the continuity of royal dynasties.

Now, it is probable that as the date for the great event drew near, it was just this aspect of it, as a gesture of the Holy Alliance, that came to impress itself upon the American Minister's mind. He could hardly fail to reflect that France, under the new Sovereign as under the old, had not given any very clear indications of cordiality towards the great American Republic or any of the newly born republics at this moment struggling for life under America's ægis. On the contrary, there was a good deal of positive hostility here and there rampant. Just then, too, Prince Metternich arrived in Paris and it was rumoured that he had come on behalf of the Holy Alliance to induce Charles X to interfere actively against the late Spanish colonies. But while Brown did not credit this (as a matter of fact, Metternich had only come to Paris to the bedside of his dying wife) the Court atmosphere was most chilly where the United States were concerned. To lower still further the temperature, a few weeks later, General Devereux, an American and a friend of Brown's, who had been active in Bolivar's campaign, was arrested while travelling in Italy, by order of the Austrian Government. His papers were seized and he was confined in the ducal palace at Venice for ten days. From thence he appealed to his Minister in Paris, who sought out Baron Vincent, the Austrian Ambassador, for an explanation. There was a good deal of vexatious delay before Devereux could be released. The worry of all this, coupled with having to concern himself with the affairs of Mexico, Peru and Colombia and make representations on their behalf, again affected Brown's health. On top of all this came a request from the Dutch, Swedish and other Ministers in Paris that their American confrère should join them in a protest which they

were making to the French Foreign Office in connection with the approaching Coronation banquet. It appeared that they were not to dine with the Ambassadors, but in a hall by themselves !

This was too much. Brown felt the twitches of rheumatism coming on more acutely than ever, and decided that, after all, the Reims Coronation could get on very well without him. It was rather a blow to Mrs. Brown, who had ordered a splendid robe for the occasion ; it was also a disappointment to the faithful Sheldon, who was forthwith invited to take the afflicted Minister's place. But it appeared that he, too, was suddenly unwell. Diplomatists are often subject to these occasional indispositions, and in the upshot both he and his chief set off for Aix together to take the waters, while in historic Reims the ill-starred Charles was being anointed, crowned and enthroned with great pomp.

It was perhaps hardly worth so much expense. Five years later his Majesty was fleeing for his life for the second time, and feudal monarchy—so dear to the heart of the Holy Alliance—was for ever dead in France.

In the course of that summer the Minister managed to have an interview with Damas about South America. He told him that President Adams wished strongly to see the war ended there. It had gone on raging for nearly seven years, causing an incalculable waste of blood and treasure. What could be gained by Spain's persistence ?

"I admitted [he reported] that the surrender of the colonies which Spain had long possessed might cost her some sacrifice of pride, but that, after a war of seven years, England, a nation more powerful than Spain and placing an equal value on her honour, had acknowledged the independence of her former colonies and had ultimately promoted her own best interests by doing so.

"In answer to his remarks respecting the Great Powers of Europe and the necessity of consulting their wishes, I observed that in endeavouring to obtain peace for America, it was not the wish of the Government of the United States to disturb the tranquillity of Europe—that they were deeply interested in the peace of every quarter of the globe, that the considerations which I had the honour to submit were in the interest

and for the security and extension of peaceful relations as well in Europe as in America, and equally addressed themselves to the reason and reflection of all Governments." [1]

Unhappily, reason and reflection do not always attract or govern the policies of statesmen, as a century of diplomatic history, since, amply attests. Brown was politely thanked for his altruism; but, of course, every statesman on the Continent knew and said that America, aided and abetted by England, was really at the bottom of all this wicked rebellion against the rule of poor Spain.

President Adams, seeing that it was only running one's head against a brick wall, abandoned his altruism for the time being, and Minister Brown was instructed to confine himself to pressing for a settlement once and for all of the bill against France for spoliations—now many years overdue. Brown had already made several attempts to get an answer out of the French Ministry, but each time he had been met by evasion. At last, in September, Damas wrote that if the Minister would call he was prepared to go carefully into the matter. Brown complied, and at the interview Damas stated that he had most carefully read all the American memorials and arguments and had, he regretted to say, reached the conclusion that the claim advanced by the United States was "not sound."

Not sound? Brown could hardly believe his ears. No, continued the Baron, the claim was untenable because France, at the time of these unfortunate spoliations, warring with Europe for her life, had had to protect herself. Besides, if she were to pay for all the damage inevitably wrought in that conflict, not all her present possessions would suffice to discharge the debt. America ought to have urged her claim at the time the other countries did, and not ten years afterwards. "But," protested the American Minister, "you forget that the then Minister, the Duc de Richelieu, had himself advised Mr. Gallatin against taking that very course! Surely France is better able to pay now than when she had all her creditors at her throat."

The interview was, as we may imagine, very unsatisfactory,

[1] Brown to Henry Clay, July 12, 1825.

and ended by Damas observing complacently that he would again consult with the King and his colleagues and see what could be done in the business. Brown immediately suspected that the 8th Article of the Louisiana Treaty would be again brought to the fore and set against the indemnity claims, to prevent which he committed to paper a formal and emphatic refusal on the part of his Government to consider any connection whatever between the two topics, which hereafter were to be kept as separate as the two sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

But the Minister might have spared his paper and ink. The French Ministry were not likely to lose any opportunity for evasion and confusion of the issue for some years to come.

In 1826, his official predecessor, Gallatin, now Minister to England, came over on a visit to Paris after a three-years' absence. He wrote home that to him the most remarkable change in France during that period was the total extinction of Bonapartism.

"This [Gallatin wrote, October 18], I am happy to say, appears to have had a favourable effect on our friend Lafayette, who was very ungovernable in all that related to petty plots during my residence as Minister, and to whom I had again spoken on the same subject in the most forcible manner whilst he was in America. His opinions and feelings are not changed; but he appears to be thoroughly satisfied of the hopelessness of any attempt to produce a change at present."

Lafayette told his American friends that after the death of Charles X and the Dauphin, the Duc d'Orléans would dispute the legitimacy of the Duc de Bordeaux and become a constitutional king. Gallatin thought this a "doubtful and distant contingency," but its fulfilment, at least in part, was far more imminent than he dreamt.

James Brown, at all events, was not to remain to witness it. On March 4, 1829, a new President, Andrew Jackson, entered the White House and the American Minister to France was ready—and more than ready—by this time, to relinquish his post to a successor.

That delicate and cloistered lady, Mrs. Brown, was impa-

tient to depart at once. She had long since wearied of being mistaken for *the* Mrs. Brown in the *salons* and fashionable auditoriums of Paris.

"Dowdies," wrote John Randolph of Roanoke, when writing to his friend Edward Livingston, while the Browns were still in the French capital, "won't do for European Courts—Paris especially. There and at London the character of the Minister's lady is almost as important as his own." Consequently Randolph, late Minister to Russia, thought Paris the very place for his friend's beautiful and fashionable wife.

"There she would dazzle and charm; and surely the *salons* of Paris must have far greater attractions for her than the yahoos of Washington."[1]

But although President Jackson wished his friend Livingston (whose elder brother Robert had held the post a generation before) to accept the Paris mission, his Secretary of State, Van Buren, a consummate politician, thought that two Louisianians in succession at Paris would cause certain undesirable heart-burnings and soul-searchings. Accordingly he proposed the name of William Cabell Rives of Virginia for the post. Rives was well under forty, a successful lawyer, and one of Jackson's keenest supporters in Congress, a man of culture and agreeable manners, married to a young and pretty wife. It was believed that Rives would make a very good representative at the French Court.

Van Buren, it may be mentioned, had his own ideas about the diplomatic service, and was as keen for its improvement and for enhancing its dignity as Gallatin had been. He was not at all impressed by certain notions of "republican simplicity" in eschewing all diplomatic uniform whatsoever; he had duly noted the criticisms from the Ministers at foreign Courts; but the question was, what kind of uniform could the President be brought to approve?

By the time Minister Rives was ready to sail he not only had in his pocket his general and particular diplomatic instructions, but a copy of the Presidential suggestions for the garb in which he was to appear at the Court of Charles X.

[1] Randolph's Letters. Hunt: *Life of Edward Livingston.*

W. C. RIVES.

From the portrait in the possession of the family.

"From a suitable respect [wrote Van Buren[1]] to what is understood to be the usage of the several Courts of Europe, requiring the members of the Diplomatic Body accredited to them to wear a court dress upon established occasions, such as their presentation to the Sovereign or chief executive officers of the Government, the President has thought proper to adopt the following as the dress to be used by our Ministers and other diplomatic agents upon all such occasions, which is recommended as well by its comparative cheapness as its adaptation to the simplicity of our institutions, viz.: A black coat with a gold star on each side of the collar near its termination, the under-clothes to be black, blue or white, at the option of the wearer; a three-cornered *chapeau à bras*, a black cockade and eagle and a steel-mounted sword, with white scabbard.

"It is understood, however, that the use of this particular dress is not prescribed by the President. It is barely suggested by his direction as an appropriate and convenient uniform dress for the use of our Ministers and other diplomatic agents at foreign Courts."

Opinions will perhaps differ as to the severe simplicity or cheapness of the dress thus indicated, but it must be remembered that in 1829 it accorded much more with the prevailing masculine mode than it would do to-day; at all events, even if the prescription were followed to the letter, it left plenty of room for individual taste; for the waistcoat and breeches might be pale blue in colour and of plush or satin, at the wearer's discretion. Rives himself wore black satin breeches, with silver buckles on his shoes, relieving any severity at the neck with a voluminous cravat of lace-edged white cambric, and being a handsome man with a high complexion the dress well became him.

In the compendious set of instructions to American Ministers abroad, compiled by Van Buren, Rives was told that:

"Among the most important general duties of a Minister of the United States in foreign countries is that of transmitting to his Government accurate information of the policy and views of the Government to which he is accredited and of the character and vicissitudes of its important relations

[1] July 20, 1829.

with other Powers. To acquire this information and particularly to discriminate between that which is authentic and that which is spurious requires steady and impartial observation, a free though cautious correspondence with the other Ministers of the United States abroad and friendly social relations with the members of the diplomatic body at the same place."

As President Jackson was very much in earnest about the American spoliation claims the new Minister was supplied with complete and detailed instructions on that head.

Thus equipped Rives and his young wife, formerly Miss Judith Page Walker (who, if not quite so brilliant and fashionable a person as Mrs. Livingston, was comely and pleasant-mannered), set out. They had scarcely arrived in England than there came news of the downfall of the Villèle Ministry in France and the accession to power of Prince Polignac. "This," wrote Rives to Van Buren, "is not favourable to our cause."

He was right; it was not favourable to anything—even the peace of France and the French monarchy.

Yet when the new Minister, at the beginning of October, waited on the Prince he was

"received by him with an easy and unostentatious civility. His conversation was very general. On my part I assured him of the anxious desire of the United States to remove any cause of difference and to cultivate relations with his Most Christian Majesty." Rives reported that the Prince's conversation was "discursive, he not glancing at my business."

With Charles X Rives had an audience on October 25, and was courteously received. But he was not greatly impressed, and thought the King had embarked on a very dangerous adventure, the opposition of the Press to the Polignac Ministry continuing unabated. Nevertheless, Rives determined to press forward the plan of a Treaty for the long-deferred settlement of the American claims. This was carefully drawn up, and on being despatched to the Minister, Polignac promised to examine it carefully and cordially. Nevertheless, when many weeks later he addressed Rives on the subject it was to bring forward once again Article 8

of the old Louisiana Treaty which Rives's predecessor, Brown, had incontinently put out of court! A fresh and tedious correspondence on the justice of the claims loomed on the horizon. How to escape it?

On December 29 Mrs. Rives, in a letter to a friend, describes her entry into French society.

"The first step I took for this purpose was to allow the Princess de Polignac, the lady of the Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, to present me to his Majesty and the Royal Family. It was a mere matter of course for her to present me, as *I* was a *foreign affair*."

After this sprightly introduction, she continues:

"I could not realize the scene at all, though there stood the King, throne and all, and though I had been warned that I should be dazzled even to blindness by the majesty and splendour of it all. Whether, however, it was the effect of a sort of constitutional quietness of disposition, so that I am not easily scared, or that I am too good a republican to be dazzled by the paraphernalia of royalty, I do not know, but to me there was something so nearly approaching the ridiculous in the whole affair that it was with some difficulty I could refrain from laughing.

"I believe the old gentleman, who is said to be one of the most amiable of kings, perceived a sort of quizzical expression about his new acquaintance, for he accosted me very merrily, laughing heartily at his own jokes, and spoke entirely in English, which the Princess told me was a peculiar compliment."[1]

On the other side of the Atlantic, President Jackson resolved to take the vigorous line which his supporters expected of him, and in his annual message he expressed himself with complete candour on the subject of French procrastination. Perusal of this message gave so little pleasure to Charles X and Polignac that they expostulated with the American Minister, saying that Jackson's tone was one of menace to France. When Rives reported this to

[1] T. W. Page: "A Woman in the Paris Revolution of 1830" (*Harper's Magazine*, December 1901).

Washington, Van Buren wrote back (April 2) in mingled indignation and reproach :

" The liberality displayed by the United States in not pressing upon France, in the hour of her difficulties, the immediate discharge of her responsibilities to our citizens, the undeviating delicacy with which they have presented their claims in the season of prosperity and the patience with which they have awaited the result, are considerations which should dissuade the King of France from too readily construing into a tone of menace the frank but not unfriendly language in which the President has expressed the sentiments of the Government and people of the United States.

" In looking through the history of this unpleasant subject of discussion the past is found to be so pregnant with causes of dissatisfaction at the course pursued by France in so perseveringly refusing to satisfy our claims, that if surprise be at all excited it should be rather at the patient forbearance which has characterized the conduct of the United States than at any expression of discontent which the long delays have produced among the numerous class of citizens directly interested in the result of the negotiations."

In short, the whole affair was " gradually undermining the friendly spirit of America towards France," and Polignac had better be made clearly to realize this.

Rives needed no urging. In conveying his Government's sentiments, he told the Foreign Minister that France had long since conceded the justice of the American claim—why, then, not drop all these arguments and delays and pay the money ?

At this the Prince de Polignac professed to be shocked.

" *Vous posez de nouveau* [he wrote, June 15] *en fait que les réclamations des États Unis sont d'une justice incontestable ; que la France a reconnu l'obligation d'y faire droit et que j'en suis convenu moi-même. Encore une fois, Monsieur, jamais le Gouvernement du Roi ne s'est prononcé dans ce sens.*"

Polignac could utter this bold repudiation with the greater assurance because just at that moment everything seemed at last to be going prosperously with the King and his

Ministry. Who could have foretold the swift disaster which was awaiting both? The expedition against Algiers had succeeded brilliantly, the cordiality between the fleet and the army seemed perfect, the foreign Governments regarded the whole exploit without jealousy. Indeed, they hailed the triumph of France in that quarter as their own deliverance from a common nuisance which had too long been allowed to exist. On July 17 Rives wrote to Washington that "as soon as the King had heard of the fall of Algiers, he ordered the cessation of the blockade, and the ports are now open to the commerce of all nations"—a generous action which the United States would appreciate.

Moreover, on the domestic side, all appeared calm. The result of the elections had been favourable to the popular cause, and the nation at large seemed to regard its interests as safe in the hands of its elected representatives. The French harvest and the vintage were full of bountiful promise.

And then, suddenly, on Monday, July 26, Paris was flung into blazing excitement and confusion by the publication of certain royal ordinances, signed at St. Cloud the previous day, by which at one blow the liberty of the Press was suspended, the new Chamber was dissolved and the franchise delimited. In the course of three days the most powerful dynasty in Europe was shaken and overturned, its standing army cowed and routed and the fever of revolt communicated to every country in Europe.

On the very day before the bolt was launched which was thus to ruin Polignac and his master, Minister Rives had seen the Foreign Minister, who struck him on this occasion as especially pleasant and friendly.

"Believing that a disposition was really felt to cultivate friendly relations with the United States, I thought it important to intimate to him that the preservation of those relations must depend on a prompt adjustment of the reclamations which had been so long pending and that no plan would be favourably received unless it had the prospect of a fair and substantial indemnity unclogged with exceptionable conditions."

Thus Rives reported in his despatch on the morning of

July 26 to the Secretary of State. The despatch was interrupted. Three days passed before he resumed:

"But these prospects have for the present ceased in consequence of *one of the most wonderful revolutions which has ever occurred in the history of the world.*

"At this moment the tri-coloured flag waves over the Palace of the Tuileries and the city of Paris, after passing through three days of commotion and bloodshed, is now as tranquil under the Provisional Government as I have ever seen it under the royal authority. The King, who, with all his Ministers, remained at St. Cloud during the troubles here has, it is said, abandoned St. Cloud and taken the route of the Netherlands. The whole of the troops stationed at Paris, amounting to 30,000, after sustaining severe losses from the heroic and enthusiastic onsets of the people, have either been driven out of the city or have joined the standard of their fellow-citizens." [1]

Rives continues:

"Yesterday a Provisional Government was organized with the general assent of the people by the deputies who found themselves at Paris. It is composed of MM. Lafayette, Casimir-Perier, Odier and three or four others. The National Guard has been re-established, and General Lafayette, as in 1789, again placed at the head of it. General Gérard is named commander of the troops of the line, who have joined the popular cause."

A little later he adds:

"Everything at present indicates that the Bourbons will no longer reign. The most probable supposition is that the Duc d'Orléans will be called to the throne."

There is no hint here or in any of Rives's official correspondence that he himself had played or was destined to play any personal part in the swift and amazing revolution which was to transfer the royal power, not from a Bourbon prince to one of the leaders of the people, but from one Bourbon prince to another. Yet it is certainly arguable that had William Cabell Rives, when his advice was sought by Lafayette, pronounced boldly for a republic, the French

[1] Letter-book.

Second Republic would have been proclaimed in the year 1830 instead of 1848.

This was not unsuspected at the time and some months later caused Rives to be attacked in America as a monarchist and anti-republican. For Lafayette had been the acknowledged arbiter of the situation. All his life he had been notoriously a republican. He had frequently plotted for a republic. Yet now that his chance had come it found him assailed by doubts. Nothing would have given the aged marquis greater satisfaction or so completely have fulfilled his fondest ambition than to have been himself chosen by his compatriots, in the manner his friend and patron, Washington, had been chosen, President of the Republic. But age and experience of the character of the French people had brought wisdom. He well knew he could not count on the stability either of his own leadership or of a republic. It was an act of abnegation, but he took the most prudent course. At his bidding the deputies called upon the Duc d'Orléans to come forward as Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom.[1]

After this first step he saw Rives, and the matter was discussed at length between them. Lafayette was fearful that any action of his should endanger his American popularity. He now used the words he had repeatedly used for half a century: "You know I am a republican and that I consider the Constitution of the United States as the most perfect system that has ever existed."[2] What, he asked Rives, would, in his opinion, be thought in America if he (Lafayette) were to throw the weight of his influence on the side, not of a titular republic, but of a constitutional monarchy where the rights and the liberties of the people were effectually safeguarded? His own opinion was that the French people were monarchical at heart, but that there was in France only one prince who was politically safe and who could save them —Louis Philippe of Orléans, "one of the young patriots of 1789, one of the first generals who caused the tricolour to triumph."

Thus appealed to, Rives seems to have given the answer

[1] Lafayette's Proclamation, July 31.

[2] Lafayette to the Duc d'Orléans, *vide* Sarrans' Memoirs.

that Hamilton or Morris would have given, but which could hardly have been expected from Jefferson or Monroe—that under the circumstances the best and most stable form of government for the French would be "a popular throne, surrounded by republican institutions," and, further, that he was certain that such a form of government would have the tacit approval of the most enlightened Americans, though it could not find open expression.

Lafayette's judgment being thus fortified and his apprehensions relieved, he proceeded to act. Had Rives's advice been different—had he said what several members of his own party said when they heard of the revolution, that America hated kings and monarchies, that anything short of a republic was a political crime, and that Lafayette had forfeited the confidence of his American admirers and committed an act of treachery to his republican principles—it is, at least, open to us to believe that the marquis's conduct would have been different. Lafayette certainly performed an act of signal abnegation, for, as one of the disillusioned deputies protested, "If, as you say, we *must* have a king, why not *you*?" In an interview he had with the duke he found him as good a republican at heart as himself and with an equally high opinion of the American Constitution. "It is impossible," declared Louis Philippe, "to have lived two years in America without being of that opinion. But," he went on, "do you think in the situation in which France stands, and in the present state of public opinion, we can venture to adopt it here?"

"No," was Lafayette's response, "what the French people want at the present juncture is a popular throne surrounded by republican institutions."

"That is just what I think," replied the duke.

But although this opinion was held by many of the judicious deputies, as well as by Minister Rives and Lafayette, it was by no means that of a majority or even a respectable minority of the revolutionary leaders, some of whom were frankly disgusted and murmured that Louis Philippe had been foisted upon them. Several of Lafayette's friends were at pains to explain away his action. It was said that when the marquis presented the new monarch to the people he exclaimed,

"This is the best of republics," whereas, as he afterwards wrote to General Bernard, what he had really said was, "This is the best we have been able to do in the way of a republic." [1]

The American Minister's approval was freely quoted, and the duke (whom the ingenious young M. Thiers discovered to be not a Bourbon after all, but a Valois) was proclaimed the ruler of France. He himself wished to take the title of King Philippe VII. On August 8 we find Rives writing to Van Buren that he proposed, in presenting a new letter of credence, to be guided by the example of his predecessor, Crawford, under similar circumstances.

"As there may be some uncertainty as to the name under which the new king will reign (though in the regular course he will be Philippe VII) it will probably be best to send me a letter in blank and one filled in with the name of Philippe VII."

Albeit, he soon learnt that his friend Lafayette had objected to the assumption of the latter title (there was the popular cry, "plus de Bourbons," to be reckoned with) and that the King had written him in English, "You have gained your point; it shall be as you wish."

On August 8 Rives wrote to Van Buren:

"In regard to the probable disposition of the new Government on the subject of our claims, I have seen no reason to change the opinion which I expressed to you in a private letter some time ago. It is an unquestionable fact, strange as it may appear at first sight, that the Liberal Party who will now come into power have been heretofore much more opposed to our claims than the Royalists. A solution of this phenomenon must be found in the circumstances that the Liberals, from their popular attachments and connections, have more sympathy for the public purse, while from their former connection with the imperial authority they are less inclined to admit the iniquitous character of the acts for which we demand indemnity. This latter consideration, as well as the great principle of national sovereignty established by the Revolution which has just taken place, will, in all probability, prevent them from recurring to the ground of *irresponsibility* for the acts of preceding governments.

[1] Sarrans; *Letters of Louis Blanc.*

What has been done, too, under the late Ministry must have some effect. Great reluctance, however, will be undoubtedly felt to pay our demands and every effort will be made to reduce the *amount* by excepting the particular classes of claims."

But Rives well knew that he had a strong card to play—the King—and he intended to play it. Louis Philippe could hardly withdraw his support now. On August 13 the new Ministry was organized, with Count Molé as Foreign Minister, who the same day sent Rives a long letter, exposing the whole situation of the new monarch, his advisers and the tricolour. It was almost in the nature of an apology.

"The Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Peers [wrote Molé [1]], in proclaiming a divorce absolute and eternal between France and the elder branch of the reigning house, have consecrated a fact that is out of all human power to destroy. But the maintenance of the monarchical system in France, its embodiment in the Orleans branch, sufficiently attests the salutary effects of time and experience on the spirit and character of the French nation. It also offers the best guarantee of peace."

The American envoy was desired to assure his Government that the King had been reluctant to ascend the throne, and had only been prompted thereto by his firm devotion to duty.

Mrs. Rives went with Washington Irving to the Chamber of Deputies and wrote home an account of all she saw.

"On our arrival we found a great crowd of citizens of every sort around the portal, looking at everyone as they descended from their carriages with a degree of familiarity that was far from being agreeable. 'Aha, monsieur,' said one of them, scrutinizing Mr. Rives, 'you are quite fine with your *habit brodé*, but where is the tricolour?' pointing at the same time to a national *cocarde* which adorned his own rusty hat and a tricolour ribbon depending from a buttonhole. Mr. Rives smiled. '*C'est dans mon cœur*,' said he, putting his hand on his heart. 'Bravo!' replied the patriotic bourgeois, and immediately the crowd parted to right and left, leaving a space wide enough for a coach and six to pass."

[1] Letter book, Rives to Van Buren, August 18, 1830.

Three days later Rives received an invitation to dine with the King.

"He received me with great cordiality, expressed in warm terms the friendly interest with which the visit he made to the United States thirty years ago had inspired him, assured me that, as King, he would preserve the sentiments of the Duke of Orleans, and that every effort should be made on his part to settle the differences (if differences they might be called) between the two countries, and desired me to communicate his sentiments to the President."

Rives felt that he had, indeed, a strong ally. On August 18 he reported:

"I have taken measures through General Lafayette to call the attention of the new Minister of Finance to the views I had presented of this subject to his predecessor."

In sending Jackson's autograph congratulations to the new ruler through Rives, Secretary Van Buren expressed the hope that the indemnity treaty would now go forward without trouble. The change of government seemed a most happy stroke for America. Van Buren told Rives, much to the latter's relief, that his countrymen were enthusiastically in favour of the revolution and "would be disappointed if good did not come of it."

Rives was perfectly well aware of the kind of good that was expected to come of it, but he grew less confident as the weeks wore on. Early in September he reported:

"I have had a chat with Serrurier, who was very cordial about our claims. The principle of responsibility he was ready to admit, but—popular as our nation was in France, our claims were not so; that a Minister would incur great responsibility in the settlement of them; that Count Molé thought of the organization of another Commission, consisting of the two Chambers."

At last, when Molé gave way to Count Sebastiani in November, the King exerted all his influence and the draft of a Franco-American convention was drawn up and approved by his Majesty. It only remained for the royal commissioners to fix the exact sum to be handed over by France.

While this cyphering process was going on, Count Sebastiani was seized with an inspiration. He begged Rives to call upon him. He said that the matter had gone too far now to waste time in undignified haggling. It was France's turn to be generous. Notwithstanding the weight to be attached to a recommendation from the commissioners the Government had determined not to limit itself to the aggregate sums it might set out in dreary column after column, but "in a spirit of signal good faith had authorized him to propose a lump sum of fifteen million francs as a definite adjustment of all the subjects in controversy between the two nations."

No wonder Rives had difficulty in suppressing his wrath and indignation!

"I replied [he wrote] that I was altogether astonished at such a proposal—that my Government, instead of seeing in it an evidence of good faith, could regard it in no other light than as a mockery and equivalent to an absolute refusal of justice."

Considering that the least the French owed and the least the United States demanded was fifty millions, Sebastiani's proposal was cool enough. Yet he declared he was shocked and pained at Rives's unreasonableness. The bargaining began anew. Eventually Edward Livingston, who succeeded to Van Buren as Secretary of State, took a hand in it. The sum due was fixed at twenty-five million francs ($5,000,000) to be paid in six annual instalments, and the Convention of 1831 was agreed to by the King and the Chamber of Peers.

Rives's health, meanwhile, had suffered and his physician recommended him to take a holiday. Moreover, his wife had endured a twofold restriction of her social activities, first by the stirring events of the Revolution and secondly by her having given birth at the Legation to a son, who afterwards grew up to be a noted engineer, Alfred Landon Rives, father of the popular American novelist, Amélie Rives (Princess Pierre Troubetskoy). Accordingly, the pair set out for some weeks of continental travel.

On their return Rives took up the diplomatic threads once more, hoping to see his long and strenuous efforts finally

rewarded by a substantial draft on the coffers of the Bank of France. He remained in Paris until September of the following year—long enough to witness the frustration of his high hopes, the absolute refusal of the Chamber of Deputies to ratify the Convention.

It was all very awkward and very sad. What labours and delays—what travail of spirit ! The French King and his Ministers had done their best ; the American claims were still unpaid. What, then, would be President Jackson's next step ?

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

On his return to America, James Brown settled in Pennsylvania and died in 1835 in his seventieth year.

In 1849 W. C. Rives was again appointed American Minister to France. See Chapter XIV.

CHAPTER XI

EDWARD LIVINGSTON (1833–35)

It was high time to demonstrate to the French that an American chief executive, even though himself occasionally hampered in these international matters by his own Senate, was not to be trifled with by any foreign body.[1] An expedient was adopted which turned out to be not altogether happy. Jackson sought to bring matters to a head by drawing a bill for the amount of the first instalment upon the French Minister of Finance. This bill, in accordance with current mercantile practice, was sold to the United States Bank, which promptly transferred it to a European banker for collection. One fine morning the bill was presented to the astonished French Minister of Finance. This gentleman, having no funds wherewith to meet these few paltry millions (the sum, however, may have seemed vast to French eyes) naturally refused it; and the dishonoured bill came back burdened with many additional thousands in fines and expenses to the drawer, Secretary McLane, of the United States Treasury.

Jackson was furious at what appeared to him downright repudiation. The incident came at a particularly unfortunate time, as he was just then having his own domestic difficulties with the United States Bank. He therefore, on Minister Rives's return from Paris, turned once more to Livingston, who for the past two years had been serving as

[1] "President Jackson," afterwards commented a writer in the *Débats*, "no doubt imagines that nothing has changed in France the past fifty years. He has never had the idea of reading the Constitution of the people he is dealing with. The Minister of the United States at Paris is no better informed of our constitutional forms. President, Senate, Ambassador—all believe they are doing business with an absolute monarch who does what he pleases with the money of the State."

his Secretary of State and so was intimately conversant with the circumstances.

Livingston's friends had long been urging him to accept the French mission. Lafayette had written him :

" I had anticipated the pleasure to see you and your family in France as Minister. . . . Knowing your intimacy with the President and his experienced confidence in you, I was assured that the appointment greatly depended upon you ; nor did I think that you should find in Mrs. Livingston, Cora and your friend Davézac great objection to your accepting the mission to France."

John Randolph of Roanoke also had written him, in the letter from which a passage has already been quoted :

" Let me conjure you to lay this matter to heart and accept, not the Chiltern Hundreds, but the mission to France, for which you are better qualified than any man in the United States. In Mrs. Livingston, to whom I present my warmest respects, you would have a most able coadjutor."

This time Livingston yielded to the President's wishes. On May 24, 1833, he resigned the Secretaryship of State and accepted the French mission.

Naturally Mrs. Livingston was enchanted at the prospect. Her beauty, wit and elegance had made her an acknowledged leader in Washington society. The letters of the time are filled with her praises. Although now well on in the " dangerous forties," the former Louise Davézac of St. Domingo had lost none of her regal charm. She had also preserved her engaging French accent and her dresses had been, rather notoriously, imported from Paris long before Jackson's remission of the silk duties.

" Although she has never been in France," wrote Eliza Peyton to her sister, " Mrs. Livingston, in carriage, manners and conversation, is quite the *elegant Frenchwoman.*"

Only in the previous month she had taken a farewell of her beautiful daughter Cora, on the latter's marriage to Thomas Barton of Philadelphia. Now, to her great joy, she learnt that the Bartons were to accompany them to Paris, the President having appointed her new son-in-law

to be Secretary of Legation. Nor did Jackson's handsome behaviour to the family end there. Mrs. Livingston's younger brother, Auguste Davézac, at that time without profession or occupation, was also provided with a post. He was appointed Chargé d'affaires at the Hague.

It was a happy family party that sailed August 14, 1833, for Cherbourg.

"I own we are going to France at last under the most favourable conditions [wrote the new Minister's wife before sailing]. Our visit has been postponed so long, but now we shall travel in comfort, and see everything and everybody without having to vex ourselves over the expense. Mr. Livingston [she added] looks and feels ten years younger."

Edward Livingston had then just completed his sixty-ninth year. His hair was still black and his features serene and prepossessing.

In person, character and antecedents no two men could have been more unlike than himself and his old friend and patron, Jackson. Livingston had been educated at Princeton; his brother, elder by thirty years, had been Secretary of State and Minister to France; one of his sisters had married General Montgomery, killed at Quebec; while another was the wife of General Armstrong, later Minister to France and Secretary of War. He himself had entered Congress at thirty; as a lawyer he had practised law with Hamilton and Burr, and before he was forty he combined the offices of the United States District Attorney for the State with that of Mayor of the City of New York. Livingston was a man of parts and breeding, wrote correct and forcible English and secretly aspired to poetry. Some of his letters display a quite delectable fancy. Once, for example, having read in the papers that the great success of the railroads in England had induced the canal-owners to divert the waters from them, and so change them into roads, he imagined, he wrote,

"the water-nymphs joining in a chorus of joy, at the prospect of having their streams restored to their natural channels, meandering through flowery meads, dancing gaily over the sunny pebbles, leaping in all the joy of nature over the rocks of their cascades, released from the imprisonment

EDWARD LIVINGSTON. [*Wide World Photos.*

of long, rectilinear, muddy canals, where they were forced to bear the burdens of inevitable barges and reduced to the condition of dull, stagnant pools." Thereafter, instead of the vulgar parlance of bargees and traders, there would be heard only the apostrophes of poets and lovers of nature. It was a theme, Livingston thought, well worthy the pen of a poet.

To his high qualities, albeit, there was conjoined a failing which haunted Livingston throughout his career. He was careless and improvident in money matters. His expenditure was always too profuse for his means. So careless was he, or perhaps so infectious was his example, that one of his official subordinates, in making up the Federal accounts, was forced to disclose a shortage of some fifty thousand dollars. Livingston at once shouldered the responsibility, resigned both his offices, pledged his property and effects to cover the deficit, and, probably advised by his brother Robert, emigrated to Louisiana.

This was in 1804; from that moment began his connection with French-speaking society, French law and French institutions which a generation later was to land him in Paris as the protagonist of his country in the second bitterest dispute the United States have ever had with France.

Owing to the inevitable private and official litigation resulting from the transfer of the territory, the new-comer's law practice grew rapidly. So did his personal popularity and influence. Having lost his wife four years before, in less than a year from his arrival in New Orleans he married a young and beautiful Creole widow, Louise Davézac, who had fled from St. Domingo when the revolution had devastated that island. In that bloody affair the girl, who had already been deprived of her husband, lost her father, two brothers and an aged grandmother. On her marriage to Livingston she spoke no English; he became her tutor in that language, which eventually she spoke with fluency, although always with a marked accent. The birth of a beloved daughter, Cora, riveted Livingston's connection with the new State of Louisiana, for which he was at the pains of preparing an elaborate legal code, which, however, the Louisianians ungratefully refused to adopt.

On board the ship which was now, a quarter of a century

later, taking him to France, Livingston doubtless felt happy enough, save when he thought of the Treaty and the difficult business which awaited him. On embarking at New York some recent French newspapers had been put in his hands, notably *La Tribune*, containing comments of a painfully unfriendly character towards President Jackson and the American Government and denouncing the presentation of a draft on the Minister of Finance as a piece of unheard-of insolence.[1] On the other hand, Livingston had every reason to expect a friendly welcome personally from Louis Philippe. He also felt that his own reputation as a jurist and the author of the Louisiana Code would ensure him a favourable reception, at least amongst fellow-jurists and humanitarians. In case of the document not being already as widely known as it deserved to be, he had taken the precaution of carrying with him a trunk containing one hundred neatly bound copies for presentation amongst the elect in Europe. Moreover, there was always his venerable friend Lafayette, who could always be counted upon to promote any American interest at Court, in the French Legislature, and amongst his countrymen.

On Sept. 12, 1833, the Livingstons landed at Cherbourg, missing by a few days the King and Royal Family who had embarked on a short yachting trip. This was a disappointment to Mrs. Livingston; but all were reassured when told that their Majesties would be back in Paris in a fortnight or so.

Socially, just then, Paris was perhaps rather empty, but to the Livingstons all that met their gaze was novel and delightful. Their early letters home are full of Paris and the Parisians, the theatres and gardens, the progress of science and art, the Government, the Army, the people and the personages of society. The Minister himself might have been "an ardent youthful American democrat" who, noting the novelties of life in a monarchy and ancient civilization,

[1] Even in America there were some who questioned the propriety of this step. Livingston's biographer, Hunt, admits frankly that "the drawing of the bill of exchange by our Secretary of the Treasury was an unusual and indecorous proceeding. There are good reasons why financial transactions between nations should be conducted with other ceremonies than those which are proper among individuals and traders" (C. H. Hunt, 1864).

" found complete comfort in a comparison of the institutions of France with those of the United States."

Both French and English society in the capital opened their doors wide to the new-comers. When the Minister went, on October 2, to the Tuileries to present his letters of credence the King accorded him a reception to the full as he had hoped for.

" Mr. Livingston [he said], I welcome you as something more than the diplomatic representative of a friendly Power. I greet you as the beloved son of my old friend, *your revered father*, I receive you in my capacity of King, but I also greet you in the character of a grateful man."

Despite this singular misapprehension of relationship, it is to Livingston's credit as a diplomat that he did not destroy the effect of so gracious an effusion by explaining to his Majesty that the King's former friend and personal creditor was not his father but his elder brother Robert. He tactfully took this tribute to his own youthful appearance with complacence, reserving a disclosure for a future occasion.

To the Secretary of State, Forsyth, he wrote :

" I have, since my arrival, been living inconveniently in an hotel, taking time to get my establishment on a footing of economy united with the necessary respectability of my station ; and I find that the four articles of house-rent, coach-hire, servants and fuel will take about seven thousand dollars, leaving for all my other expenses, in this expensive capital, two thousand dollars. I make this statement, not because I can have any interests in it, for I am not rich enough to remain here until some remedy could be applied to the evil, but for the honour of the country, and to enable it to avail itself of the services of others than men of large fortune."

This long continued a stock complaint with American Ministers in Paris.

" In two years," wrote Livingston to Davézac, " the necessary expenses of an establishment here would embarrass me greatly." He hoped, therefore, to achieve the particular object of his mission in eighteen months.

In his first interview with Louis Philippe and his Foreign

Minister, the Duc de Broglie, Livingston ventured to urge the calling of a special session of the Chambers to give the necessary legislative sanction to the Treaty of 1831. But the King was not seated so firmly on his throne as to welcome such a step. He promised, however, that the needful measure would be submitted at the forthcoming regular session and expressed an earnest hope that it would be carried.

Livingston soon perceived how formidable was the antagonism amongst the deputies to the Treaty. The two opposition parties, Carlist and Republican, closed up their ranks against what they regarded as the common enemy, the Broglie Ministry. The chief republican organ, the *Tribune*, did not hesitate to allege that, out of the 25,000,000 francs named in the Treaty, 14,000,000 only were destined for the Americans; the rest would find its way into the private purse of the King, who had already recompensed the negotiators of the Treaty with a *douceur* of half a million. Thus was explained the haste shown by the July Monarchy to conclude a treaty so detrimental to the rights, the interests and the national pride of France, from which previous ministries had abstained.

It proved to be the key-note of the debate in the Chamber of Deputies which began on March 28. Boissy d'Anglas, Berryer, Salverte and Mauguin—Bourbons and Republicans alike—drew a picture of France deceived, humiliated, abased by the present Ministry.

More aggressive still was the harangue of Berryer. He compared—O perennial comparison!—the calamities endured by all the States of Europe during the wars of the Republic and Empire with present American prosperity.

"In the midst of all the misfortunes of the European belligerents, in the midst of the depredation orders by the different cabinets, whether by orders in council at London, or by imperial decrees from Berlin, Milan or Rambouillet, there is one Power in the world who, in the midst of all this ruin, enjoys an increasing prosperity, and it is this Power to-day which demands an *indemnity* from France!"

So thrilled and inflamed was the Chamber by this eloquence that (as M. Marcel Marion remarks) "if Berryer had actually

wished at that moment to lead his fellow-deputies to an assault upon the Tuileries they would certainly have followed him." [1]

Bad as all this was, the debate, as it proceeded, became worse for the Ministry. Bignon, one of Napoleon's trusted diplomatists, ascended the tribune and proceeded to demonstrate that, so far from having lost, the Americans had really gained, owing to the continental blockades. Thus, in his opinion, the Americans were already reimbursed, and French misfortunes since had yielded them further profits.

Had Lafayette been in the Chamber his voice would certainly have been heard ; but he was then ill at Lagrange and rapidly approaching his end. His son George, a deputy, spoke for him, assuring the Chamber that in his father's opinion the sum the Americans had asked for, and been promised under the Treaty, was far less than they had the right to demand.

All, however, failed to turn the scale of opinion, and on April 1 the long-deferred bill was defeated, by eight votes, 176 to 168. The Duc de Broglie and the Ministry resigned. The King, filled with deep concern as to the effect of this defeat in America, instantly despatched a corvette with instructions to Serrurier, his Minister at Washington, to assure the President that a new Chamber of Deputies should be summoned without delay, that a fresh measure should be pressed upon them with all the constitutional powers which King and Cabinet could command and that this time the bill would unquestionably pass. In giving such assurances Louis Philippe reckoned—as he often did—without his hosts.

Having reported the situation to the Secretary of State, Livingston set off on May 2 on a holiday tour with his wife and daughter, leaving his son-in-law Barton behind as Chargé d'affaires.

It was now that, in view of the prevalent state of public opinion, a most unfortunate incident occurred. In the harbour of Toulon, amongst other foreign warships, lay the frigate *United States*. Salutes were being fired in honour of the return from Algeria of the French flagship, the *St. Philippe*. On May 4 one of the American guns, carelessly loaded or left loaded with a heavy ball, killed in its discharge two

[1] *Revue des Deux Mondes*, November 1926.

Frenchmen and wounded several others. The news, signalled to Paris, created much excitement. The dying Lafayette roused himself to dictate a letter to Livingston, expressing the hope that the report was not true. It was unhappily true. Barton issued a statement, full of regret and condolences, promising compensation to the survivors and the injured. But the comments upon the tragic episode were not everywhere generous.

It was perhaps Lafayette's last letter. Had Livingston foreseen that the great friend of America was so near his end he would not have gone away; but on May 19 the aged Marquis breathed his last. There was an impressive funeral, which all the members of the American Colony in Paris attended.

The new Chamber duly met in the summer; but again nothing was done about the American Treaty. Amongst the popular prints of the day was a caricature by "Cham" depicting America in the rôle of a mendicant bully upon whom an irritated French tax-payer threatened to set his dog.

Clearly, if Livingston was not to return to America empty-handed more vigorous tactics were necessary. The recalcitrant deputies must be made to revise their judgment even under threat of actual reprisals.

The Minister went to the Tuileries on August 2 "determined," so he reported, "to make one more effort with the King." He was received in private audience, and it is possible that then and there occurred a tacit understanding with Louis Philippe as to the precise character of the pressure to be brought to bear.[1] As Livingston wrote to Forsyth:

"I repeat to you my firm persuasion that the moderate tone taken by our Government when rejection was first known was attributed by some to indifference and to a

[1] That the King ever actually committed himself in writing to the American Minister's plan is preposterous. Yet Curtis, in his Life of Buchanan, repeats a story that "when Judge Catron called on Jackson to urge him to moderation in his Message concerning France, the President took from his drawer a letter from Louis Philippe himself requesting that the Message should contain a threat by war, lest the payment again be defeated by the French Chamber." What Jackson *may* have shown his visitor was a letter from Livingston,

conviction on the part of the President that he would not be supported in any strong measure by the people; and by others to a consciousness that the convention had given us more than we were ever entitled to ask."

In December he wrote again:

"I saw last night an influential member of the Chamber who told me he had dined at the Château a day or two since and that the King had spoken of our affairs and appeared extremely anxious to secure the passage of the law. I mention this as one of the many conversations which, independent of official assurances, convince me that the King is sincere, and I have no doubt of the sincerity of his Cabinet.

"From all this you may imagine the anxiety I shall feel for the arrival of the President's Message. On its tone will depend very much, not only the payment of our claims, but our national reputation for energy. *I have no doubt it will be such as to obtain both these important objects.*" [1]

In the interval the Minister, Mrs. Livingston and the Bartons had been enjoying Paris social life to the full. There had been a splendid ball at the Tuileries and another at the British Embassy. Mrs. Livingston's letters home recounted the impression Lady Granville made upon her—"a delightful woman—so simple and yet so *spirituelle*. She knows everybody, French and English, intimately, and hits off their characters." She had met and conversed with the famous literary lights—Thiers, Guizot, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, George Sand and Balzac. For his part, her distinguished husband had presented with gusto a number of his fair compatriots at Court and at the leading houses and keenly enjoyed their triumphs. To his friend Dallas he wrote in December:

"Tell Mrs. Dallas that her townswoman, Mrs. W[hite], is making the greatest sensation in all the fashionable circles. On her arrival I had the pleasure of introducing her at Lady Granville's soirée, which happened to be a very crowded one. It is impossible to describe the effect produced by her entrance. 'Who is she?' 'Where does she come from?' 'How beautiful!' 'How graceful!' 'How modest!' 'How

[1] Legation Letter-book, December 22, 1834.

well dressed ! ' ' An angel ! ' ' A Hebe ! ' was exclaimed by a hundred voices."

On receiving Livingston's guarded communication President Jackson needed no further pressing : he had already, indeed, made up his mind. His patience—always with him a limited commodity—was now fully exhausted. The Message for the December session of Congress was prepared in his most uncompromising style. Louis Philippe might or might not be sincere, but Jackson saw that the only way was to associate the King himself as a party to the national default. To have suggested any cleavage between the Citizen-King and his Legislature would be giving hostages to the party of repudiation.

" My conviction is [he went on] that the United States should insist on a prompt execution of the Treaty and that, in case of refusal or further delay, we should take upon ourselves measures of redress."

The President then proposed the adoption of a law authorizing the seizure of French property in case no provision should be made for the payment of the American debt at the then impending session of the French Chamber.

The American packet was due on or about January 7, and Livingston in his eagerness sent one of his Legation staff to meet it at Havre. All that was forthcoming, however, were copies of the New York newspapers containing the President's pronouncement—nothing from Jackson himself, or the Secretary of State. But a single newspaper report was enough and to spare—Livingston perceived that those parts of the Message relating to France would create a sensation.

It turned out that a rather larger number of copies than usual of the New York *Evening Post, Globe* and *Courier* had reached Paris—several were unexpectedly received by quite obscure opposition deputies. The chief portion of the document was translated at once and printed at length in the leading Paris newspapers of the following morning (Jan. 8, 1835) when the public learnt France had been grossly insulted by " *ce* Jackson." In the cafés, as in ministerial bureaux and newspaper offices, hot-headed persons bent over copies

of the *Journal des Débats* or the *National* excitedly reading aloud the most scathing passages.

Perhaps, at the Tuileries, the Citizen-King felt that his energetic fellow-ruler across the Atlantic had been too outspoken. He did not altogether relish the references to himself, although it might be indispensable that he and his Ministers should figure as a target for the President's reprobation. On the whole, however, the Message made action by France more urgent. Only—the Message contained a threat. The popular indignation must be placated; the President must be answered. The rôle of injured innocence must be assumed. After consultation with the Comte de Rigny a letter to Livingston was drawn up. The French Government had (it declared in effect) been shocked and pained by *General* Jackson's imputations and menaces. Yet, though deeply wounded, they were not to be dissuaded from the course they had previously resolved upon, before his Message had been read. *General* Jackson might vilify and threaten their ruler and their country; but the Citizen-King's Government were not to be deflected from the path of good faith and justice. France was going to pay the bill and the Ministry had already drawn up a further measure for presentation to the Chamber. But some mark at least must first be given of his Majesty's displeasure. His loyal servant, M. Serrurier, must no longer be left at Washington exposed to the repetition of such offensive language. Serrurier would, therefore, be recalled. Should, in consequence of this step, the American Minister in Paris desire his passports, they were at his disposition.

Livingston hesitated, but finally decided not to demand his passports. He would rather await instructions from Washington and the course of events.

Nevertheless, he was not at all easy in his mind. He actually seems to have suspected the French Government of treachery. On January 15 he wrote the Secretary of State:

"If the law should be rejected I should not be surprised if they anticipated our reprisals by the seizure of our vessels in port or the attack of our ships in the Mediterranean with a superior force. I shall without delay inform Commander

Patterson of the state of things, that he may be on his guard, having already sent him a copy of the Message." [1]

But the Minister's fears were groundless. The last thing Louis Philippe and the French people wanted was a war with America; nor did they ever really credit the possibility of America's warring with them.

Meanwhile, Livingston busied himself with a lengthy reply to the Foreign Minister, the Comte de Rigny, for whom, by the way, he had no particular love.

His note opened with a rebuke to that Minister for the title of address which he had bestowed upon the President.

"It is proper to state that, although the military title of General was gloriously acquired by the present head of the American Government, he is not, in official language, designated as *General* Jackson, but as 'the President of the United States,' and that his communication was made in that character."

March had drawn nearly to a close before Livingston heard from Washington. Van Buren wrote him under date of the 8th:

"Mr. Forsyth met me this morning at the President's with your last letter to de Rigny, and we went through it very deliberately. I could not express myself too strongly for the opinion I really entertain of its merits. Remember what I say to you, that hereafter, when the correspondence is published, it will be selected from the mass as giving the clearest, the strongest, and best-tempered of the matters in controversy."

Separately, Jackson informed Livingston of his warm approval. He would not, he said, have been surprised or displeased if Livingston had promptly quitted Paris with

[1] In the archives of the Embassy there is a copy of the instructions sent (March 10, 1835) to Commodore D. J. Patterson, commanding U.S. Squadron, Mediterranean:

"Sir: on receiving advices from our Minister to France, Mr. Livingston, that there is immediate danger of war with France, or in case you receive this information from other sources, the correctness of which you cannot doubt, you will return to the United States with the squadron under your command with all convenient despatch. (Signed) M. Dickerson, Secretary of the Navy."

his Legation. Under the present circumstances, he was instructed, in case the new bill was rejected by the Chamber, to depart forthwith in an American warship.

Livingston did not have long to wait for the issue. On April 9, 1835, a ten days' debate began in the Chamber of Deputies, in the course of which thirty-five orators ascended the tribune.

The debate went on for ten days. This time it was clear that the Government would carry their bill, and they did so on April 18. All would then have been well, had not an amendment by General de Valèze been passed previously by a large majority. "No payment," it said, "should take place without the Government being furnished with an adequate explanation of the American Presidential message of the previous December."

As this was equivalent to demanding an apology from the Chief Executive of the United States, once again the "fat was in the fire." Such an apology Livingston well knew Jackson would never give—never!

Reluctantly, the Minister decided he had better go home. He had done his best for the Treaty—time must do the rest. He had filled the Paris mission for twenty months—two months longer than he had originally calculated. Although an unreasonable proviso had been tacked on to the French legislative sanction, at least the Treaty had been confirmed.

Before giving up his post one thing only remained—but in Livingston's eyes of vital importance—to reassert to the French Government and people the right of an American President to speak his mind freely to Congress on any subject without cavil or criticism from foreigners. He, therefore, composed a lengthy diplomatic note—his parting shot—to the Duc de Broglie, in which the retiring Minister laid it down that—

"The President, as the chief executive power, must have a free and entirely unfettered communication with the co-ordinate powers of the Government. As the organ of intercourse with other nations, he is the only source from which a knowledge of our relations with them can be conveyed to the legislative branches. . . . The principle, therefore, had been adopted that no foreign Power has a right to ask for

explanations of anything that the President, in the exercise of his functions, thinks proper to communicate to Congress, or of any course he may advise them to pursue. . . . If this be submitted to, neither dignity nor independence is left to the nation. To submit even to a discreet exercise of such a privilege would be troublesome and degrading, and the inevitable abuse of it could not be borne. It must, therefore, be resisted at the threshold, and its entrance forbidden into the sanctuary of domestic relations. Any attempt to enforce it will be repelled by the undivided energy of the nation." [1]

It has been remarked that all these eloquent periods constitute only a piece of special pleading, intended to cover Jackson's plain speaking. Technically, it is true, diplomacy has no business with what it has no right to hear. But a nation accused of fraud and duplicity might well blame its representative in the country concerned if he did not report the accusation, especially if emanating from the head of the Government. France was, according to modern diplomatic usage, correct in demanding an explanation. But Jackson was not the man to eat his words : and in his attitude he certainly had the bulk of the nation behind him.

Livingston and his family left Paris for Havre the last week of April 1835. The day before his departure the aged Minister stood in the Place de la Concorde, and, reflecting that he would never, in all probability, see the capital again, bade it a solemn adieu.

He left Europe reluctantly ; he would greatly have liked to visit England—to have seen his brother-in-law in Holland. But, as he wrote Davézac, a further sojourn was

" impossible after the refusal to pay ; for such, in effect, is the annexation of a degrading condition. My stay in Europe would be considered as evidence of a desire to resume my mission."

Barton, with his wife, remained behind as Chargé d'affaires for another six months in the hope that the French Government would retreat from its position, and the Livingstons sailed by the frigate *Constitution*, arriving in New York on June 23.

[1] Legation Letter-book.

In America, as the summer wore on, several factors, notably the aversion of the Senate, led by Clay, to warlike measures against France, and perhaps the counsel of some of his personal friends, led Jackson at last to take a step towards propitiation. In the Message of December 7, 1835, after denying any intention "to menace or insult France," he pointed out that:

"France having, through all the branches of her government, acknowledged the validity of our claims and the obligation of the Treaty of 1831, and there really existing no adequate cause for further delay, will at length, it may be hoped, adopt the course which the interests of both nations, not less than the principles of justice, so imperiously require. The treaty being once executed on her part, little will remain to disturb the friendly relations of the two countries—nothing indeed which will not yield to the suggestions of a pacific and enlightened policy and to the influence of that mutual good-will and of those generous recollections which we may confidently expect will then be revived in all their ancient force."

At the same time he would never apologize for anything that he had previously said of France, for domestic consumption:

"I hope it is unnecessary for me to say that such a sacrifice will not be made through any agency of mine. The honour of my country shall never be stained by an apology from me for the statement of truth and the performance of duty."

This Message had scarce been uttered than word came from the Chargé d'affaires in Paris that he had demanded his passports, and was closing down the Legation. A final appeal on his part to the Duc de Broglie had been answered by the statement that France would never pay a sou until a categorical apology was forthcoming.

"We will pay the money [wrote Broglie] when the Government of the United States is ready, on its part, to declare to us, by addressing its claim to us officially, in writing, that it regrets the misunderstanding which has arisen between the two countries; that this misunderstanding is founded on a mistake; that it never entered into its intention to call in

question the good faith of the French Government, nor to take a menacing attitude towards France."

And he added:

"If the Government of the United States does not give this assurance we shall be obliged to think that this misunderstanding is not the result of an error."

Such arrogance revived all Jackson's wrath. It almost seemed to him a direct response to his own olive branch. But it was really only due to the tardiness of communication in those days. Had the President's last message been telegraphed to Paris, the Duke's letter would have been different.

Jackson waited until Barton had returned, heard his report and then drafted a special message to Congress on the subject. But this time he had the prudence to send the draft to Livingston who happened to be in Washington. On reading it Livingston saw it would never do. He wrote Jackson that it was "unnecessarily irritating":

"You have told them home-truths in the first [Message]. You have made a case that will unite every American feeling on the side of our country. . . . The draft you did me the honour to show me would make an admirable manifesto or a declaration of war; but we are not yet come to that. Our cause is so good that we need not be violent." [1]

It went sorely against the grain, but Jackson gave way. He dearly loved speaking out his mind; and the prospect of a further hearty indulgence in sabre-rattling had exhilarated the old soldier. Nevertheless, he accepted his friend's draft of a new message, firm and yet commendably moderate in tone, and this he substituted for his own.

The time had now come for an older and more conventional diplomacy to intervene. A dangerous *impasse* persisted; both France and America had got themselves into a position in which neither party could give way without sacrifice of national pride. Recognizing this, Bankhead, the British Chargé d'affaires in Washington, offered Britain's mediation.

[1] Jackson papers. Livingston to Jackson, January 11, 1836. The admirable M. Marcel Marion, of the Institut de France, was unaware of this letter or he would never have said that Livingston was "*un diplomate de l'école de Jackson, qui prenait plaisir à jeter de l'huile sur le feu.*"

After characteristically stipulating that his Government would not yield an inch of ground in the dispute, Jackson accepted the offer. France also acquiesced.

In consequence of this friendly intervention, it was happily discovered in Paris that the President's Message of December 7 had been virtually an *amende honorable*. At all events, French honour professed itself satisfied.[1]

Baron de Rothschild wrote immediately to advise the Washington Government that four of the six instalments due had been paid by the French Finance Minister into his bank, and that the balance would be promptly forthcoming.

Thus in 1836, after many years of strenuous diplomatic effort, beginning with Ministers Crawford, Gallatin and Brown's representations, continued by Rives's negotiations with the Prince de Polignac and the Government of Charles X, dramatically interrupted by the Revolution of July, by the conclusion of the Treaty of 1831, by all the long and frequent ministerial councils, the acrimonious debates in the Chambers, by the occasionally scurrilous press campaigns in the Press of both countries and the threats of war, was the heavy and ruthless spoliation inflicted by the Emperor Napoleon on American shipping paid for at last by the French people.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Edward Livingston did not long survive his return, dying at Montgomery Place, his estate on the Hudson, in 1836.

[1] Had it been otherwise it is now known that Lord Palmerston was prepared to take this view of the case and to make representations to the French Government accordingly. The only instance of a downright and unreserved apology in modern international history was to come thirty years later, when Great Britain apologized to the United States for its conduct in the *Alabama* affair.

CHAPTER XII

CASS AND KING (1836-46)

"GOD be praised! We have no Paris, with its powerful influence and its inflammable materials. He who occupies the lowest cabin upon the very verge of civilization has just as important a part to play in the fate of our country as this denizen of the proudest city in the land."[1]

The sentiment of the passage is impeccable; but, coming from a diplomat actually residing in the French capital, it might have been misconstrued, and indeed, when a quotation was restricted to only its first clause it did not give unalloyed pleasure to the Parisians. But Lewis Cass really loved France as much as he detested (or professed to detest) England, and enjoyed his life there, and if he was apt to parade his democratic and Anglophobe sentiments rather too freely it must be remembered that he was a politician with the Presidential "bee in his bonnet" who knew that his utterances were read everywhere by the vast electorate at home.

Cass had begun his career as a young officer in the War of 1812, from which he retired as brigadier-general. Since then he had been so long connected with the North-West—for nearly twenty years he was Governor of Michigan—that people forgot that he was a New Englander born. He had gradually, by dealings in land, amassed a considerable fortune; a pushful, active, uncompromising man, who had no intention of hiding his light under a bushel. Jackson made him Secretary of War, but he was rather an embarrassment in that office, and the President was relieved when his friend accepted the mission to France.

Cass duly sailed with his wife and two young daughters, but, as diplomatic relations with France had not yet been renewed, on his arrival in England he was obliged, much to

[1] *France: its King, Court and Government, by an American.* 1840.

his distaste, to spend several weeks in London, during which his fellow-Minister there, Andrew Stevenson, made the necessary arrangements with the French Foreign Office. At last the obstacles were removed, Cass crossed the Channel, and on December 1, 1836, Livingston's successor had his first interview with Louis Philippe and entered upon personal relations with that monarch which continued cordial and even intimate for the next six years.

The new Minister had carefully prepared a speech for presenting his credentials, and this he now delivered.

"The United States [he observed] look with pleasure upon the prosperity of France, upon the great advances which she has made in literature, science and the arts, and upon the many valuable contributions she has added to the general stock of public knowledge, and they sincerely hope that her career of improvement will long be unchecked by any of those adverse circumstances to which all nations are more or less liable. And this hope derives strength from a confidence in the wisdom and experience of your Majesty so often manifested during your reign, and most acceptably to your Government upon a recent occasion, when your Majesty's good offices were exerted to bring to a happy termination those differences of opinion which at one time led to the apprehension that their earliest and long-valued friend might be severed from the United States."

In his reply, "after a kind allusion to myself, the King was highly gratified in receiving an American Minister at his Court; that no one more regretted the interruption of the diplomatic relations of the two countries than he had done, nor was anyone more anxious for their restoration." He reminded Cass that he had been in America in early life and had been treated with much hospitality and attention. He stated that his personal wishes in favour of the adjustment of the late difficulties were well known and he added emphatically, "You have now received justice, and only justice." "He observed that the injuries of which we formerly complained would have been committed only in a stormy period like that which for a time almost unsettled everything in Europe."

"He alluded very happily to his travels through our country, and mentioned persons and places with such conciseness of detail as showed that the incidents there had left a strong impression upon his memory. He spoke in English with great fluency and ease.

"I do not [added Cass] entertain a doubt but the King expressed himself with great sincerity to me on the subject of his anxiety for the prompt fulfilment of the Treaty. His manner was earnest and emphatic, and all our countrymen here with whom I have conversed believe he acted with entire good faith." [1]

Yet, despite all these sentiments, Cass was obliged to remind the Foreign Minister, Count Molé, that the interest due to America under the Treaty had even now not yet been paid. He had to indulge in several little reminders, accompanied by a bill for five and a half million francs, before Molé promised (February 1837) to refer the matter to a royal commission. And this, after everything was supposed to be settled! [2]

Meanwhile, the Minister and his family were engaged in hunting for lodgings, finding relaxation at balls and parties and amongst their compatriots in Paris—some half hundred of whom were presented at Court. Under date of February 2,

[1] It is interesting to recall that a young American, Charles Sumner, who shortly after this passed some time in Paris, was equally impressed. To a friend he wrote:

"There is no individual about whom I have more changed my mind by coming to Paris than Louis Philippe. I had hitherto esteemed him a sensible, prudent, but ordinary sovereign. I find him a great one, truly great; mingling in business as much as his Ministers, and controlling them all. He is more than his cabinet. Measures emanate from him. He stands now, with the Republicans pressing on one side and the Legitimists on the other, both complaining of broken oaths and promises; the first, of his ancient relations with his cousin, Charles X. His habits are very industrious. He rises so early as to be in his study at eight o'clock; breakfasts at ten with his family; from twelve to four attends to public business, receives, etc.; from four to six takes his exercise; at six dines with his family, with whom he passes the evening till ten o'clock; when he retires to his study, and writes till two o'clock, his hour of retiring. It is supposed that he is engaged upon some book—memoirs, perhaps. . . ."—Charles Sumner: *Memoirs.*

[2] To judge by the Minister's Journal Molé was at this time a highly elusive personage. "Called three times at Count Molé's. Did not see him," is one entry. Again (March 7): "Called at the Foreign Office, but did not find anyone in." (18): "Called on Count Molé, but did not find him in." The Foreign Minister was certainly taking no risks of meeting an importunate creditor.

1837, we find the following entry in one of the Legation Letter-books, interesting for its enumeration of leading Americans then in Paris :

" In the evening attended Mr. Crowninshield and Miss Sears' wedding at her father's house, 10 rue de Courcelles, at nine o'clock. Noted this in the Journal at Mr. Sears' request. They were married according to the Episcopal service by Bishop Luscombe.[1] Present: the family, Mr. and Mrs. F. Appleton, Mr. and Mrs. Powell, the American Minister and lady, Miss Isabella and Miss Matilda Cass, the secretary of Legation (Anderson), the Consul, the Vice-Consul, Mr. Gray, Mr. Otis, Mr. Appleton, Jr., Mr. Motley, Dr. and Mrs. Hosack, Mr. and Mrs. Welles."

In the following month Cass signed a three years' agreement for a mansion at the corner of the rue Matignon and the rue Ronselet at 11,000 francs per annum, beginning with the following October.

The General was fond of travelling, and in accepting his appointment had stipulated that he was to be allowed in the first year of office to take a six months' tour to the Levant in an American warship, and so, on April 3, he set out on board the *Constitution* for Italy, Greece and Turkey. On his return he published an account of his travels, and afterwards set about writing a volume on *France: its King, Court and Government, by an American,* which was highly flattering to all four topics and established Cass more firmly than ever in the royal favour.

In his absence the *Moniteur* in August announced that the sum of 1,022,185 francs had at last been paid to the American Treasury, being interest calculated on the first four instalments of the Indemnity in consequence of the non-fulfilment at the proper time of the Treaty of 1832.

The Minister, recognizing that it was hopeless to try to improve this figure, recommended that the Rothschilds should be authorized to give a receipt in full, and this was done.

Amongst the Americans in Paris that winter was the future eminent statesman, Charles Sumner of Boston, whose letters home give very good pictures of the scenes and personalities

[1] Chaplain at the British Embassy, who, the year before, had married W. M. Thackeray and Miss Shawe.

of the period. In one of them he tells us that he dined in the Avenue Matignon with the American Minister—"a man of large private fortune, said to live in a style superior to that of any Minister ever sent by America."

"Mrs. Cass did not appear at table, being ill. The company consisted of about fifteen or sixteen; and among them the Mexican Ambassador and an Englishman with a title, and a star on his coat, whose name I did not catch. The table was splendid, and the attendance perfect, servants in small clothes constantly supplying you with some new luxury. I sat next to the lady of 'Milord English,' and found her good-natured rather than sensible or informed; a far superior lady from the South of my own country was on my other side. Being the evening of the soirée of General Cass, I stayed after dinner for that. I should say that all left the table together, and gentlemen did not linger behind to drink wine and tell stories, or discuss politics. Of course, much less wine was drunk than at an American table; though there was offered some of almost every kind. General Cass's hotel is furnished sumptuously."[1]

Cass's intimacy with the King and royal family and the political conditions in France lends interest to the view he expresses in his letters home from time to time. Thus, in 1842, when the heir to the throne was killed as the result of a carriage accident, we find him writing to Secretary Daniel Webster (July 16):

"The death of the Duc d'Orléans is considered here the gravest event, with the exception of the Revolution of July, which has happened in Europe since the battle of Waterloo. It has thrown the public into general consternation. The King is advanced in life, and, though his health is good, still from his full habit and his being deprived of much exercise, his hold upon life is very uncertain. The heir of the crown is an infant of four years old and the dynasty has occupied the throne but twelve years. A regency is everywhere considered a dangerous period of the Government; but here from past events it is peculiarly unpopular. The Duchess of Orleans, being a Protestant, will not probably be proposed. The Duc de Nemours, had he the requisite popularity and talents, would seem to be the proper person. But he has little hold

[1] Thayer: *Life of Sumner*.

LEWIS CASS.

upon public affection. The Queen is universally respected, but she is too old. I have heard no other names mentioned. In the meantime, a man of capacity and influence at the head of the Government seems indispensable to France."

Both of General Cass's daughters were lively, well-educated girls—especially Miss Matilda, who was the favourite amongst the French ladies. It is to be feared, however, that both affected their sire's somewhat intense and unreasonable Anglophobia, and in consequence were not seen at Lady Granville's brilliant parties at the British Embassy—which was a pity, and caused some surprise to one young American when he came over to Paris on a visit about this time.

"I am afraid General Cass makes no secret of his opposition to English measures and English ideas of every kind, perhaps with a view to a future political campaign in the United States."

But pronounced Francophile although he was—even going the length of writing to the French Foreign Office in French (for which he was taken to task by the State Department [1]) —yet he could make no greater headway with a commercial reciprocity treaty than any of his predecessors. In fact, Cass remarked, with pain, that the consumption of American tobacco in France was less than half what it had been fifty years before.

"I called [he reported] upon Marshal Soult and entered into a general conversation with him on the subject. His remarks in relation to an exclusive system of trade, heretofore so much favoured in France, were liberal and practical, and I left him, as Mr. Jefferson says he left M. de Vergennes in 1786, under a strong impression that we might hope for some favourable result."

Yet when the subject came up in the Chamber Soult supported the old system, and the bill for reciprocal tariffs was defeated by 249 to 23.

[1] To Secretary Forsyth, who wrote (March 30, 1840) requesting that the correspondence should be in English, Cass said: "I have found by experience that when letters were addressed to the Foreign Office here in French they were much sooner answered." However, in future, he would accompany his notes with a translation, *if necessary!*

"Well," reported Cass, "this is beyond the reach of diplomatic discussion." He added:

"As long as France, in carrying out the restrictive system she has adopted, can export to the United States twice as much as she imports, so long the present state of things will continue, exhibiting one of the most striking examples of inequality in the trade between two nations which is to be found in the history of modern commerce."

But the most famous passage in the annals of Cass's mission was approaching. In December 1841 the representatives of England, France, Prussia, Russia and Austria met at London and entered into a treaty for the suppression of the slave trade. The cruisers of each nation were accorded the right to detain and search vessels belonging to any of the others if such vessel should "on reasonable grounds be suspected of being engaged in the traffic of slaves." Cass at once construed this as a diabolical attempt on England's part to authorize her claim of search and visitation. He therefore, in February 1842, sat down in the Legation and wrote a pamphlet, *The Right to Search—by an American*, and had it printed and distributed over two hemispheres.

Such a performance could hardly fail to make a sensation, and was equally praised and derided, according to the views held on this burning question. Charles Francis Adams publicly denounced it as "absurd," and privately wrote:

"Cass's Protest against the ratification by France of the Treaty signed and sealed by her own Ambassador, is a compound of Yankee cunning, of Italian perfidy and of French *légèreté*, cemented by shameless profligacy, unparalleled in American diplomacy."

Not content with having written and published his pamphlet, Cass went further. In sending a copy to the Foreign Minister, Guizot, he protested against France's being a party to the Treaty, and the Chamber of Deputies, taking alarm, actually refused to ratify it.

Everywhere amongst the abolitionist party, this action brought down a flood of abuse on Cass's head. Even Daniel Webster, the new Secretary of State, observed caustically that Cass "thought to make great political headway upon

a popular gale." In England, Brougham in the House of Lords, after denying that the British Government had any ulterior motive—" any general right of search is not sought or contemplated "—attacked the offender as " a leader of low American democracy pandering to mob jealousy of England."

Von Holst, in his *History of the United States*, calls Cass " a scheming political log-roller of mediocre endowments and mediocre education."

Professor McLaughlin, Cass's biographer, admits that the " prime motive for the action of Cass in this affair was his inveterate dislike and distrust of England." [1] On the other hand, Schuyler thinks that Cass's action was a timely and effective defence of American rights. " Fortunately," he says, " our Minister to Paris at that time was General Lewis Cass, a man of great experience, of decided views and [*sic*] who had succeeded in obtaining a very intimate and friendly footing with the French Government." [2]

Wheaton wrote : " For the first time in our history could it be said that the American Government had exerted an influence on the policy of Europe."

While this was happening in Europe, America and Great Britain were engaged in formulating another measure concerning Maine boundaries and other outstanding matters between the two countries. This, the Ashburton Treaty, was signed August 9, 1842, and, to General Cass's disgust, in it no renunciation had been wrung from England of her hated " right of search," for which he had been so long and vigorously contending. He regretted bitterly that " some declaration had not preceded the Treaty by which the extraordinary pretension of Great Britain to search our ships at all times and in all places, first put forth to the world by Lord Palmerston in August 1841, and in October following again claimed peremptorily as a right by Lord Aberdeen, would have been abrogated."

Cass spoke his mind freely to Webster.

" When [he said] he opposed the Treaty for the Suppression of the Slave Trade he had suggested a distinct

[1] A. McLaughlin : *Lewis Cass.* [2] E. Schuyler : *American Diplomacy.*

renunciation on England's part of the right of search. The pretension itself was one of the most flagrant outrages which could be aimed at an independent nation and the mode of its communication was as coolly contemptuous as diplomatic ingenuity could suggest. 'It is for the American Government,' says Lord Aberdeen, 'alone to determine what may be due to a just regard for their national dignity and national independence' I doubt if in the wide range of modern diplomacy a more obnoxious claim has been urged in a more obnoxious manner. What we ought to have said was: '*Before we treat upon this matter there is a preliminary question which must be settled. We will do no act which may possibly appear to be a recognition of your claim to search our vessels.*'"

A laudable desire to terminate "this horrible man-stealing and man-selling" was all very well, but it could not justify everything. "By this Treaty we are to keep a squadron upon the coast of Africa. We have kept one there for years. . . . But if a British cruiser meets a vessel bearing the American flag, what is to prevent this cruiser from searching this vessel now as before?"

To Webster he wrote again (September 17, 1842):

"With the intelligence of the ratification of the British-American Treaties, all apprehensions therefore of any immediate difficulty with that country are at an end, and I do not see that any public interest demands my further residence in Europe. I can no longer be useful here, and the state of my private affairs requires my presence at home."[1]

Webster had no objection to offer to this course and the Cass household began to pack up for departure. On November 11, 1842, the American Colony in Paris tendered the retiring Minister a banquet at which a number of complimentary speeches were made.

"General Cass," wrote a correspondent, "has won all hearts at Paris. They loved the man: they admired the dauntless envoy of their country."[2]

Cass's eloquence on this occasion was a little heavy. "There was little to lighten the heavy rhythm of his sentences," avows McLaughlin, "nothing of the froth and airy nothingness of modern after-dinner speech-making."

[1] Legation Letter-book. [2] New York *Courier and Enquirer*.

Charles Sumner went a little further: "Cass could speak for an indefinite length of time on any question, but nothing ever came from him which was not prosaic and commonplace."

But this may have been prejudice. Sumner could never forgive Cass for his attitude towards the slave trade, which he believed was dictated by the slave-holding interests in the South.

President Tyler made no new appointment to the French Court for a full eighteen months after Minister Cass's return, and then he sent in the name of a gentleman from Alabama—a name which excited amusement amongst the frivolous.

"Our Yankee cousins [observed a writer in the *Morning Post*] having got over their repugnance to monarchical institutions in France, are now, we learn, sending over a King to that country."

Even in Congress a Massachusetts member was not above a punning allusion to the patronymic of William R. King, nor did his fellow legislators withhold their tribute of "laughter."

Another wit pointed out that the "King" was surely a titular redundancy born of American ignorance, inasmuch as in Europe "R" was generally understood to express the regal status. What it really expressed was "Rufus."

Nevertheless, in the midst of all the manifest frivolity in the diplomatic contacts and references between the American Minister and the French monarch, there frequently did occur some nominal confusion, which furnished Anglo-Saxon dinner-tables in Paris with much cheap witticism.[1]

The new Minister reached Havre early in June 1844 and on July 1 had his first interview with Louis Philippe at Neuilly (where he was then in residence).

Mr. King reported to Secretary Calhoun:

"Nothing could be more cordial than the reception of the King. He reciprocated very warmly my assurances of national and personal good-will and acknowledged with marked sensibility the just tribute which I paid to the virtues of his family. Referring to my allusion to the assistance rendered to the United States at the period of their revolutionary

[1] It was only a repetition of what had happened when Rufus King had been appointed Minister to England a generation before.

struggle, he observed that the recollection of it afforded him great satisfaction, and added in emphatic words and manner that he considered America the natural ally of France. Much more to this purport and in this strain the King delivered in very good English, expressed in warm and well-chosen terms."

The envoy was afterwards presented to the Queen and the Duc de Nemours. On the American Independence Day he dined with Louis Philippe, accompanied by his Secretary of Legation, "a compliment which derived its chief value from the selection of the day." The King in a familiar conversation broached the subject of Texas, and asked why the Treaty had been rejected by the Senate, as he had just heard.[1]

"I seized the occasion to assure him that the rejection was caused by political considerations of a domestic nature. That the object would, in my opinion, be pursued with unabated vigour. That it was my firm conviction that a decided majority of the American people were in favour of the measure, which would certainly be consummated at no distant period. Whereupon the King frankly observed that it was his desire to see Texas remain an independent State, and spoke of commercial advantages accorded to France by Treaty with that republic. I replied that the interests of France, which were purely commercial, were totally distinct from those of England, and that they would be promoted by the annexation of Texas to the United States. His Majesty admitted that the colonial possessions of Great Britain in North America involved that Power in political considerations which did not affect France, and he finally assured me, or gave me at least to understand, that in any event no step would be taken by his Government in the slightest degree hostile or which would give to the United States just cause of complaint. This declaration I consider as of no small importance, for, although a constitutional monarch, the King of the French is no cypher, but sub-

[1] The Treaty for the annexation of Texas as a "territory" was virtually completed the previous February by Abel P. Upshur, who had succeeded Daniel Webster as Secretary of State. But the accidental explosion of a naval gun killed Upshur, and he was followed by J. C. Calhoun. The Treaty was signed by President Tyler and sent to the Senate, where ratification was defeated by the slavery abolitionists. Thereafter the annexation of Texas formed the prominent political issue in the campaign of 1844. Texas was annexed at the end of the following year.

stantially his own Prime Minister; one, moreover, who does not hold his place by the uncertain tenure of a fluctuating majority in the Chamber of Deputies."

After this fervid, but somewhat heterodox, observation on the part of an American Minister, King continues:

"In the course of this conversation his Majesty informed me that his emphatic advice to the Mexican Government, as the best policy for that State and for others, was to acknowledge at once the independence of Texas."

Amongst other topics, Louis Philippe broached that of America's supposed designs on the Sandwich Islands. In reply, Mr. King assured his Majesty that American interests in the Pacific being purely commercial, nothing more was desired than to prevent any European powers from obtaining a predominance in that quarter which might be detrimental to American navigation, so extensive and valuable in the South Seas.

Afterwards the Minister sought an interview with Guizot.

"The general impression here [he wrote] is that England at this moment exerts a marked influence upon the councils of the French Government, and particularly upon the mind of M. Guizot, who is the ruling spirit of the Cabinet as well as the most able expounder and defender of its principles and policy in the tribune."

His belief was that Louis Philippe was "still pacific and would not sacrifice American friendliness to the Anglo-French Entente on the Texas question."

At the Legation in Paris a good deal was heard about a joint protest of England and France against the annexation of Texas, and Smith, the Chargé d'affaires of the Texas Republic, said the protest had actually been made. If so, it was, in Minister King's opinion, to be regretted as a proof of the malign influence exerted by England upon France. Luckily, both these countries were preoccupied just then with other questions, such as Algeria and Morocco, and there also came a mighty pother about Tahiti. However, the Texas affair would probably end well.

King thus pays tribute to his fellow diplomat, Lord Cowley:

"England is represented at this Court by a mild and

discreet man, the brother of the Duke of Wellington. He is sensible of the difficulties of the French Government, and does everything in his power to smooth the way to a reconciliation."

M. Guizot assured Mr. King (July 20) that there had been no joint protest by the two countries, adding: "I suppose, after the Senate's action, the subject of the annexation of Texas is at an end?" King told him bluntly that the project was by no means at an end. Texas was necessary to American security, and the measure was supported by other elements than the Democratic Party. No foreign Power should gain a footing in Texas. England naturally wished to prevent annexation, but would, however, not go to extremes and would rely solely upon diplomacy.

The result of the presidential election of 1844, which was wholly unexpected in Europe, gave a new interest to the Texas question. President Polk was resolved on annexation. Mr. King wrote (December 28):

"Although I still believe that the French Government will take no actively offensive steps in this matter, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that its wishes at least coincide with those of England and that its influence will be lent to a certain extent to the support of British policy. The King is for various reasons anxious to conciliate England. That country was the first to acknowledge the Government of July, which has never been viewed with a favourable eye by the great continental monarchies. . . . I make every allowance for the difficulties of his position amidst hostile and unsympathizing dynasties and threatened at every moment by the revolutionary tendencies of Europe and of France in particular. Still, these apprehensions may precipitate him into dangers of another character, and in wishing to serve a powerful friend in this hemisphere he may alienate the 'natural ally' of France in America."

In Guizot the American Minister had not the same confidence.

"Though an able, and, I believe, a virtuous man [he writes], his systematic devotion to England blinds him to other interests of hardly less importance. He is a man of the Cabinet rather than of the world, and carries into public affairs the rigid theories of the speculative politician. He

pursues his objects without sufficient regard for the opinions, sentiments, prejudices if you will, of the French people. . . . He is suspected of taking pride in the defiance of public opinion. He has rendered the English alliance almost odious in France by an ostentatious parade of deference to English policy. In the discussions upon the right of search treaties he was forced indeed to succumb, but without the grace of good-will." [1]

The American Minister noted the frigid reception accorded the King's Speech at the opening of the Chamber, which was, he thought, due to this pro-English policy.

England at that moment had her hands full.

"Her debt, her financial difficulties, her East India embarrassments, her Canadian troubles, the scarcely slumbering volcano of Ireland—will make her only too happy to limit her efforts to thwart the United States by the cheap weapons of diplomatic remonstrance and newspaper menace."

"I confess," he wrote in conclusion, "I fear more from Texas herself than from European hostility." For he had just heard that the new administration in Texas was hostile to American annexation.

The publication of Secretary Calhoun's instructions and despatches to Minister King in Paris with reference to the Government's intentions respecting Texas produced a sensation both in Paris and London. In the latter capital both disappointment and anger were shown. English newspapers roundly accused the French Government of duplicity and treachery towards England. In the Chamber of Deputies the Government's subserviency to England was denounced. There was the usual ministerial crisis, and Thiers was heard to express his unqualified disapprobation of the suspected co-operation of France with England on the Texas question. Then, in February 1845, came the news that Congress had passed a bill for the annexation of Texas. "England and France are united," reported the American Minister, "in a desire to induce the young Texas Republic to continue. It is a pity that France is so blind as not to see her true policy. France is not, and probably can never be, a predominant naval power. Her arm at sea must ever rest upon that of

[1] Letter-book, December 28, 1844.

America, and it is only by co-operating with us that she can hope to withstand the formidable maritime powers of England."

Finally, the Texans themselves in July voted for annexation, and in the Minister's absence on holiday, Martin, the Chargé d'affaires, reported :

"French influence was deemed by us of so little weight upon the result that we regretted its adverse exertion chiefly as evincing an unfriendly spirit towards the United States, as rather an insidious preference for England in a question of vital importance to us in which France had at best a very slight interest. No interference was in the least likely, yet [pursued Martin, who was a very shrewd observer] the United States must not count upon the friendship of this Government. Its sympathies are against us, restrained only by popular opinion. The King dreads democracy, and England dreads our future power. All the same, American character has risen in Europe by reason of the brilliant termination of the Texas question."

President Polk, in his message of December 1845, was very outspoken about Texas, and the French were much mortified, when they read it a month later, to receive a presidential rebuke.

"I have [wrote the Minister] seen the King and M. Guizot since, but only on occasions of ceremony and the unpleasant topic was not broached. Their manner, though courteous, was more than usually stately and reserved. I was the more pleased that the President had spoken out so plainly."

But a wave of definite Americophobia swept through the Press, the *Journal des Débats* calling the message "arrogant and full of detestable hypocrisy." In the King's Speech renewed emphasis was laid upon the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France, paraded, so the American envoy thought, with a pride humiliating to the French people.

It is now that we begin to note a marked revision of the judgment which recent American Ministers had passed upon Louis Philippe. It was Minister King's deliberate opinion, as expressed in January 1846, in a letter to Secretary Buchanan, that—

"Under no circumstances can the United States count upon the good-will of the King of the French. They are obnoxious to him, first as republicans, and secondly as the rival of England, and as he grows older naturally his prepossessions and prejudices grow stronger. The time has gone by when he decided it to be his interest to flatter republicans or republican institutions. This was early discovered by our lamented friend, Lafayette. Louis Philippe is now every inch a King. The most we can hope, even from public sentiment in France, is that it may repress this antipathy from ripening into active hostility. The will is not wanting, as was shown in the affair of Texas. *Our part is to regard with lofty indifference French influence in American affairs.* It is insignificant."

It was just at this time that the London *Times* came out with an article alleging, with great positiveness, that France had joined with England in a protest against the Texas annexation. One passage ran:

"Mr. Calhoun and Mr. King stated in their official correspondence, with an assurance that has seldom been equalled, that they received from the King of the French a pledge that France would offer no opposition to the work they had in hand. *That statement was utterly false*; for, although France did not conceive that her interest in the Province or State of Texas was sufficiently strong to justify a declaration of war against the aggressor, she *did* protest, as energetically as England, against the violation of those principles which are the basis and the safeguard of international relations."

When he read this the American Minister was indignant; his indignation was increased when he found the whole passage copied into the *Journal des Débats* (January 4). The *Débats* was notoriously the ministerial organ, and King therefore wrote off at once to Guizot asking for an explanation.

"This is not the first time that the veracity of my despatches and those of the late distinguished Secretary of State of the United States have been assailed in the same quarter in terms of gross outrage. But the *Débats* is another affair, and the respect which I owe myself and the courtesies of private life must not be violated."

Guizot's immediate rejoinder was that the newspaper in

question was not a government organ and he could not be held responsible for its contents. This evasion did not satisfy the American representative. He declared that unless the Foreign Minister was prepared to confirm the accuracy of the statement which he had made in his Calhoun despatch, he should feel himself compelled, from a sense of duty to himself and to his country, to suspend all further relations with the French Government.

M. Guizot said he hoped the American envoy would not adopt such an uncalled-for course. He, for his part, would repeat the assurance he had already given, that in the Texas question France would take no action hostile to the United States, or which would give them just cause of complaint. He objected, however, to Secretary Calhoun's inference that France had intended to acquiesce in the annexation. In reply, King recalled a certain interview he had had with the Foreign Minister, when Guizot had said explicitly that there would be no concerted action with England about Texas. "Impossible! Your Excellency must have misunderstood me. The error arose from my bad English!" The American Minister retorted, "But you speak English perfectly, and I jotted down the conversation at the time."

After this, endeavouring to wriggle out of an awkward situation, Guizot wrote a long explanatory letter marked "private" (*particulière*) giving the reasons which governed his official conduct. King sent it on to the President asking that, in spite of its privacy, it should be printed in his own justification.

Scarcely had he done so when fresh evidence reached him of Anglo-French antagonism to America. French and English warships had been ordered to blockade Buenos Aires. King wrote to Secretary Buchanan (January 27) characterizing this as a

"high-handed act of intervention. Unfortunately, it is generally approved of by the Opposition in this country, whose friendly attitude, so opportunely taken with regard to the Texas and Oregon questions, was an additional reason to dissuade us from abstaining from joining in this measure, so injurious to our interests and unpalatable to American pride. The serious disapprobation of the Government and

people of the United States to the course of France and England on this question is no secret."

But during the summer there came an opportunity for the French Opposition to tackle the Government on its Texas policy and on the Entente with Great Britain. M. Ballaut denounced the former as "unwise and gratuitously servile to England and offensive to the United States." This brought Guizot to his feet. He denied emphatically that the French Government had sought to control the will of the people of Texas with regard to annexation, while he admitted that the weight of its influence and the expression of its opinion had been exerted in favour of the independence of Texas, which he justified upon the ground that it was the interest of France to sustain the separate existence of a Power with which she had contracted treaties, as well as to prevent the excessive preponderance of any of the great Powers established upon the North American Continent.

On being pressed, however, Guizot did not deny that the French instructions to their representative in Texas had been communicated to the British Premier, Lord Aberdeen—a significant admission.

Altogether, if not a subject for official complaint, Minister King thought there was "legitimate cause for dissatisfaction with the course of France in the Texas question, as she has lent her influence against us." All this undoubtedly tended to impair Franco-American friendliness.

Later, M. Guizot, in the Chamber of Deputies, elaborated his favourite hypothesis that America was growing far too strong and there was a danger of her absorbing her feebler neighbours in the Western Hemisphere. Consequently equilibrium of power in that quarter was greatly needed.

In the month of June the American envoy personally sounded Louis Philippe about his views on the war which had just been declared by the United States on Mexico. He listened patiently to the monarch's assurance that he wanted nothing to do with it, that at heart he was a republican and against all monarchy, whether in Mexico or anywhere else. But by this time the American Minister distrusted all royal and ministerial declarations about French policy, and

he reminded the Secretary of State that when Mexico was blockaded there was a French squadron hovering about the Gulf which would need watching.

Happily, all danger from Franco-British policy as regards Mexico was dispelled by the removal of a cardinal cause of dispute between Great Britain and America.[1] The Oregon Boundary Treaty was signed June 15, 1846.

The American Minister in Paris wrote home that the settlement of the Oregon question having removed the only cause threatening peace in Europe, he now wished to resign. Accordingly on September 15 King sailed for home.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

In quitting Paris, Cass left Ledyard, who had married one of his daughters, behind as Chargé d'affaires, and went back home to become an unsuccessful candidate for the Presidency.

Sixteen years later, when Buchanan reached the White House, he was appointed Secretary of State, and himself in that capacity issued instructions to two of his successors in the Paris mission. He resigned at the close of 1860 and retired to Detroit, where he died in 1866, aged eighty-three.

King was, on his return, re-elected to the United States Senate and served there until 1853. The previous year he was elected Vice-President under Franklin Pierce, but his health broke down and he died before assuming the duties of his office, in April 1853.

[1] "One thing that had induced the Mexicans to attack American soldiers had been the strong probability of war between the United States and Great Britain and a hoped-for armed intervention by the latter Power between Mexico and the United States."—Channing: *History of the United States.*

CHAPTER XIII

RUSH (1847–49)

ALREADY in these pages has been reflected the opinion of successive American Ministers of the French Citizen-King. Cass's judgment was the most favourable—he had even composed and published an effective panegyric upon his royal friend: and there were few Americans admitted to any degree of intimacy with Louis Philippe who did not succumb to his blandishments. In America itself he had grown into a universally popular figure—especially after Minister Cass's return—a popularity which took the naïve form of sending gifts to the affable old monarch, whose broad facial lineaments, thanks to the industry of numerous engravers and chromo-lithographers, adorned half a million American parlours, notably in the West.[1] Thus, the American Legation in Paris found itself, for several years, the intermediary recipient of a variety of articles intended for the King of the French. One list compiled in 1847 mentions the following:

A set of false teeth.
Six barrels of flour.
A cotton mattress.
A picture.
A drag for a carriage-wheel.
A written proposition to exchange natural curiosities and scientific objects with his Majesty.
Several mammoth cheeses, barrels of apples, rare nuts.
Several improved rifles.
Texas diamonds.

To which were added a number of claims upon the King for services and expenses incurred on his behalf when his

[1] A few years later these portraits had disappeared, and to-day are only met with as great curiosities.

Majesty was travelling, a poor young exile, in the United States.[1]

Yet the new Minister, Richard Rush,[2] an experienced diplomat and former Minister to England (1819–25), who reached Paris at the end of July 1847, began by doubting whether all this hero-worship in America of the French King was deserved, whether his countrymen quite understood the real situation.

"Hardly [he reported] had I landed at Havre before I heard of the unpopularity of the King and Government. In Paris I found this tone increased a hundredfold. Everyone seemed against the King as well as the Ministers. The Press, with scarcely more than a single exception, the *Journal des Débats*, was pouring its daily fire upon all public measures. There seemed, in short, but one feeling of hostility and opposition whichever way I turned. It was to little purpose that I sometimes asked the causes of it all."

Yet the causes were not far to seek. They were general discontent and a special distrust of Louis Philippe. He was said to be hypocritical, crafty, forgetting all his great duties to the nation in exclusive devotion to the interest of his family and the perpetuation of his dynasty. A dynastic policy, a dynastic administration, a dynastic King, were the charges brought against the Citizen-King.

"Before my arrival I had been aware of the falling off in France of that union of voices which had placed him on the throne. I knew the Republicans considered that he had deceived them, that the Bonapartists had no sympathies with him, whilst the old Legitimists were always and necessarily his foes. But I was not prepared for the widespread, open-mouthed impeachments of him I everywhere caught."

There were many contributory causes of the Government's unpopularity, amongst which might be mentioned the trial and conviction of General Subières, a peer of France, and Jean Baptiste Teste, the Minister of Public Works, for corruption. More recently a shocking tragedy had occurred in

[1] Letter-book, Rush to Buchanan, October 31, 1847.

[2] Rush, who was then sixty-seven, had also served as Secretary of State for a short period under Monroe, and as Secretary of the Treasury under J. Q. Adams.

private life in Paris, the murder of the Duchesse de Praslin by the Duc, also a peer of France.

On the other hand, France was undeniably prospering; agriculture was in a flourishing state and the administration of the laws efficient. As for the prosperous state of the capital, let Minister Rush testify.

"In Paris the increase has been amazing. Whole streets and avenues have been built up. Ancient gardens have given place to vast rows of lofty houses. The entire 'Elysian Fields,' so called, and only a few years ago rural in appearance, are fast becoming encompassed by the city. House-rent is dearer than in London, a proof of the demand for houses and of the abundance of money. Instances are familiarly cited of lots and portions of ground which 10 or 15 years ago were bought for a few thousand francs now selling for almost as many millions. Large portions of this great city not new have also been improved by repaving the streets and making them otherwise better and more sightly than formerly; so that were Napoleon to come back again he would hardly know the Paris that he left, so much has it advanced in size, convenience, beauty and, above all, cleanliness, under the 'Napoleon of Peace' who has come after him. If, as has often been remarked, all France is in Paris, the extensive and solid improvements visible in the latter presumes similar improvement throughout France.[1]

"It deserves mention [added Rush] that no new palace has been built in Paris. There are indeed fewer than formerly, since Versailles has been converted by the King into a museum."

Rush arrived in Paris just at the time when the capital was celebrating the Revolution of 1830 and the foundation of the Monarchy of July. He had therefore an opportunity of seeing the King and his Court at their best. He was at once invited to dine at the palace, where during the repast he sat next to the Queen, who did not fail to speak feelingly of the kindness the Sovereign had received when, in early life, he had been a wanderer—"a kindness he could never forget." Some weeks later the King again received the

[1] This deserves to be recalled to those who are disposed to ascribe the renascence of Paris wholly to Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann.

Minister at St. Cloud and conversed with a great appearance of frankness about current politics.

The King said the English Press did him an injustice in the matter of Italy, Switzerland and Spain, " but he would be true nevertheless to his policy, which had been invariably to respect the rights of other States and rejoice as the condition of each grew better, as all reaped the benefit, France among the rest."

Just then the famous Spanish Marriages affair was looming up darkly—the proposed alliance of the King's son with the Spanish Infanta. Against this proceeding the British Government had set its face.

" On this topic the King said enough to lead me to infer very unequivocally, had there been no other or anterior evidence, that he thought the marriage of one of his sons to the sister of the Queen of Spain was a matter with which England really had nothing at all to do."

" I dare express the opinion [pursued Rush oracularly] that the King is right—right for his own country, right for Europe, right in every way. For why should England invoke an antiquated treaty interdicting such a marriage ? Why not a marriage between a son of Louis Philippe and a young Spanish lady willing to receive his suit ? "

It was plain that the Citizen-King had succeeded in justifying himself with the American Minister—who soon began to think his royal friend was a much-abused and misunderstood person.

" The King [he reported to Washington] has a hard time of it. So it must be with every king in future of this country, the French not being the people they were before the Revolution, but a free, active, high-spirited, prosperous people, more intelligent even than before, yet always excitable. They will find fault with their rulers when there is cause and when there is not. It was no irrational supposition that their excitability will not have been increased, but something abated with the growth of their general prosperity. The King, in his way, is as active and industrious as any of them. He gives his time and attention to all acts of government and looks into things personally and practically and spares himself no labour. That France still holds on to so many of her old monopolies is probably not owing to him,

whose notions may well be supposed to be too sagacious, considering the tenor and experience of his life. All seem to agree that he will reign his own time out, and doubtless he is anxious to secure the succession in his family. The longer he lives the broader and deeper are the foundations of these becoming. When he dies will the country put to hazard the tearing of them up? Will not the middle classes, grown to be so numerous in agriculture under subdivided inheritances, the merchants, manufacturers, the mechanics, the artisans—all so flourishing—will not these classes be likely to rally round the dynasty rather than be subjected to the confusion and risks likely to follow its overthrow? They are quiescent now. They are little known to newspapers, little to political coteries, but in them slumbers the true voice of the nation, *if ever uttered*, as their immense aggregate comprises the essential services of its power. They are not tyrannized over; they are not oppressed.

"And who is to succeed, if not a son or descendant of the King? Here is a great question. His sons are not drones. They are young men of energy. Their courage has been proved; they are well-educated and of pure lives. One of the sons, the Duc d'Aumale, has just had conferred upon him the appointment of Governor-General of Algeria, on which the Press has broken out anew against the King, although his son goes to perform toilsome duties and to fight amongst a fierce, semi-barbarous people whom he has already fought with signal bravery and success. As to any other form of government, what would it be? Who would agree upon it? A King, it has been remarked, *seems as necessary to the French as daily bread, and there are probably few who think that democratic forms would suit them.*"

Apology for and appreciation of Louis Philippe could hardly be more complete. This was penned in September 1847. Who could have dreamt that its author would, six months later, be the first to exult in the royal downfall?

The process of disillusion is indicated in the Minister's despatches.

War between America and Mexico had been dragging on for about a year. In March, Vera Cruz had surrendered and Mexico City was taken on September 14; but peace was not yet in sight. The United States did not propose to stay their hand, and Mexico continued vaguely to hope for inter-

vention. Rush was soon to see where the French King's real sympathies lay.

Twice at St. Cloud, in October and November, his Majesty brought up the subject in characteristic fashion.

"He began by asking me what were my accounts for the United States. 'Very favourable,' I said, 'commercially, the many and enormous failures in England appearing as yet to have affected our merchants very little.' 'I am glad to hear it,' he replied, 'but Mexico—what of Mexico?' were his next words. 'Good accounts,' I replied, 'from that quarter too, as to the success of our arms.' 'Yes, that I perceive,' he said, 'it is nothing but glory for your arms; but what of peace—that is what I think of. When will you have *peace*? That is what I wish. I wish it as the friend of the United States, as you know I am.' 'Your Majesty cannot wish it more than we do,' I said, 'but we must have peace on just terms.' 'War,' he replied, 'is always bad, and nations did not get from it what they expected, but only injure each other, as you and Mexico are doing.' 'But,' I ventured, 'when one nation has been heavily aggrieved by another, as we by Mexico, what was to be done?' 'War with her,' he again said, 'can do you no good, and had better have been avoided.' 'Avoided,' I rejoined, 'it would have been if we could otherwise have obtained what was due to us.' He reiterated his opinion on the inutility of wars, denouncing them as fertile of evil, in that general strain known to be so characteristic of his speculative sentiments, and, of late years, his practical policy. In the absence, however, as all must see, of any provocation deemed by France sufficient for war, none can forget how she made it on Algiers and Holland. Remarking to his Majesty that Mexico had positively struck the first blow in this war, I next asked him if he would allow me to express an opinion."

Rush then boldly told the King the great error committed by the United States was in submitting too long and patiently not only to

"pecuniary losses and wrongs, but to national indignities, the latter comprising outrages upon our citizens, not in single but in multiple instances, from which even our Consuls and naval officers had not escaped, and that had my country only

acted as France had acted when, ten years ago, his gallant son, the Prince de Joinville, was sent with Admiral Baudin to chastise Mexico for less than a tenth of the insults we had borne, there would have been a speedier end of them and a large part of the world would not have been misled at this day by the delusion of American aggressions upon Mexico. The comment of his Majesty upon this historical fact was, that France did not gain by it what she sought—though I could not perceive how it had at *all* failed at the time being."

The King passed on to speak of the peculiarities of the Spanish race, as seen when Bonaparte overran Spain. "He beat the Spaniards, he trampled on them, but, like the foot on grass, up it came when the foot was removed."

Rush hoped his Majesty did not intend any similitude between that war of avowed ambitious conquest on the part of Napoleon and the one America was engaged in. He said "No, certainly"; but thought we should find the Mexicans as hard to deal with as Napoleon found the Spaniards.

Rush said America had been very gentle and propitiatory with the Mexicans—"after every victory our troops had stopped; the olive branch had constantly been held out; we even desired to avoid actual entry into their capital."

At a second interview the King once more indulged in a lengthy exhortation on the beauties and blessings of peace, and Minister Rush sat silently listening to the monologue, while inwardly reflecting on the monarch's inconsistency.

"He, who keeps up 100,000 regulars in Algeria, whose country is filled with troops, whose frontiers towards Switzerland and Italy are now glittering with bayonets fourfold more than those General Scott had when he took Mexico, it is he, the head of this warlike nation, who speaks of peace. Practically always on the safe side himself, and his sons all warriors, he now presumes to read *us* a lesson on peace—to point out to *us* the danger of growing fond of war and a standing army!"

But the sands were fast running out. Madame Adelaide, the King's sister, died on December 31, and the Court went into mourning. The New Year saw the Opposition growing bolder. A common means of expressing their opinion was by holding public banquets instead of prescribed meetings

in a hall: these grew so obnoxious that the King's speech at the opening of the Chamber made a disparaging allusion to the practice. An Opposition banquet was announced for February 22. The Government decided to take action, and the banquet was forbidden.

"The positive prohibition [reported Rush] roused the feelings of large portions of the people. It became a political topic intense and absorbing, drawing into its vortex materials highly inflammable. It made a direct issue between the Government and the Opposition of all classes and shades throughout Paris. There was something to rouse pride as well as other passions in thus interposing the strong arm of government to prevent people from sitting down to a table already, in a manner, spread out before them. It looked like adding insult to a violent exercise of power."

The Government called out the troops, but there was no serious collision on the Tuesday.

"Things looked worse on Wednesday. The crowds had not dispersed during the night. Excitement increased as the numbers increased. The National Guards were disinclined to act against the people. The King was at the Tuileries. He was kept informed of all these things and took them as warnings that his ministers must be changed and that there was no time to lose."

He therefore sent for M. Guizot and told him that he had called in Count Molé as Prime Minister. Paris received this news with apparent satisfaction.

"But suddenly an opposite turn came to challenge the whole face of the commotion. The masses were still in the streets. The storm, although at first seeming to be over, left the billows up, and that day was doomed to end in deeds the most momentous of the age.

"At nine or ten at night a detachment of troops of the line stationed within the enclosure of M. Guizot's residence to protect it during the day, fired upon the people and killed and wounded perhaps twenty or thirty. Whatever caused it, the effect was fatal. The news of it spread like wild-fire. The dead bodies were exhibited in different places on vehicles drawn about with lights to show the wounds and blood of

the victims. It was now all battle and energy and war of guns."

The King called in Thiers and Odilon-Barrot, but it was now too late. The people were seething with excitement.

" Finally, an intrepid man, Girardin, opposed to the King's cause, but desiring to save him from violence and the Royal Family from the terrors of an assault upon the palace, came hastily to assure him that his cause is irretrievably gone, that the people are advancing with forces now irresistible, and that all that was left to him was flight."

Rush mentions that the Queen was opposed to this counsel, but their two sons, the Duc de Nemours and the Duc de Montpensier, thought it best; and so, the latter holding the pen for his father and guiding his hand, the King reluctantly signed his abdication in favour of his grandson, the Comte de Paris.

The King fled at noon with nothing but the clothes he had on and a few francs in his pockets, on foot, seeking with the Queen the first hackney cab they could get. The Duchess of Orleans, leading her children by the hand, escaped through the Tuileries Gardens.

" Thus fell, wrecked and ruined for having forbidden a banquet, the Orleans Dynasty!"

Rush surmises that had the other two sons of the King, the Prince de Joinville and the Duc d'Aumale, been in Paris the dynasty might not have fallen.

Rush's long account was drawn up partly from his own observation, he " having been in the streets each of the days."

" The suddenness of the Revolution is remarkable. The whole may be considered as the work of twelve or fifteen hours.

" Another thing, in spite of the fighting and firing, only about 600 or 700 were killed and wounded. But the most remarkable feature in the whole transcendent movement is that a Republic should have been proclaimed when nobody expected it. I have not been able to ascertain that even a solitary cry was raised for one before the night of Feb. 23."

Rush sought sedulously to find out how large a body of Republicans existed before the outbreak, and did not believe

they numbered more than a few thousands throughout all France.

" All agree that the Republic took France by surprise. Those who might have been willing to have had a revolution were not thinking of a Republic."

But in Rush's opinion a Republic had got to be tried, a constitutional monarchy having twice failed. The early stages of the trial proved rather turbulent, as the Minister reported in his next letter (March 4):

" Scarcely had my despatch of the 24th February been folded up when events the most momentous quickly succeeded each other. Numerous barricades had risen up in the streets, civil war continued, the people were victorious, the palace of the Tuileries was carried, the King abdicated and fled with all the royal family, and the monarchy was overthrown."

All this happened in the course of the day—Thursday.

" The confusion and tumult caused in the Chamber of Deputies by these events led to the hasty and violent close of its sitting on that day. All attempts to establish a Regency, with the Comte de Paris as successor to the throne, failed. The Queen-Mother, the Duchess of Orleans, with the young Prince himself, went to the Chamber, but soon had to make their escape. All order, all deliberation had come to an end."

The Deputies hurried to the Hôtel de Ville to form a Provisional Government which was proclaimed next morning, consisting of Dupont, Lamartine, Ledru-Rollin, Garnier-Pagès, Arago and others.

On Saturday, February 26, the American Minister received an earnest intimation that his personal presence at the Hôtel de Ville " to cheer and felicitate the Provisional Government " would be acceptable. He notes that the intimation was not officially sent, but that he believed it to be true. Rush asked for a short interval for reflection. At length his mind was made up and " before the day was out I imparted my determination to take the step."

Accordingly, on Monday morning (February 28), Rush, with Martin, his Secretary of Legation, repaired to the Hôtel de Ville. The Secretary was at first beset by some

qualms, but at length resolved to stand by his chief.[1] The Minister himself had carefully prepared his address :

" As representative of the United States [he began], charged with the interests and rights of my country and of American citizens now in France, and too far off to await instructions, I seize this early opportunity of tendering to you my felicitations, not doubting the sanction of my Government.

" It is under such institutions that the United States have for seventy years enjoyed constant prosperity with a government of uniform stability, and whilst they invariably leave to other nations the choice of their own forms without interference in any way, they would naturally rejoice in beholding this great nation flourish under institutions which have secured for themselves the blessings of social order and public liberty."

Rush concluded with quoting the pious hope of President Washington that the friendship of the two Republics might be commensurate with their existence.

It was a bold, a delicate step to take, and it gave considerable offence to other members of the Diplomatic Corps in Paris, notably the British Ambassador, Lord Normanby. And there were some Americans—on both sides of the Atlantic —who thought Minister Rush's action was a little premature.

By the Paris revolutionaries, at all events, his address was cordially received. M. Arago replied to it, saying that the Provisional Government heard without surprise, but with lively pleasure, the American Minister's remarks. France confidently expected as much from an Ally to whom she was now drawn closer by the fact of the proclamation of the Republic.

M. Dupont, the President, seized Rush's hand, exclaiming dramatically, " The French people grasps that of the American nation," and there were thundering shouts of " *Vivent les États-Unis !* " as the guard presented arms.

How like the whole scene was to Minister Monroe's appearance before the Assembly more than half a century before ! If only this Republic—so rapturously acclaimed—if only it would last !

[1] Martin subsequently resigned and was sent as Chargé to Rome ; but his health had been undermined, and he died August 26, a few days after presenting his letter of credence to the Pope.

" This succinct narrative will correctly apprise the President of what I have done. I shall anxiously await his judgment upon it all. The events were as new as momentous. They had transcended all expectation.

" In recognizing the new state of things as far as I could without your instructions and in doing it promptly and solemnly I had a deep conviction that I was stepping forth in aid of the great cause of order in France and beyond France, and that I was acting in the spirit of my government and country, the interpreter of whose voice it fell upon me suddenly to become. If I erred I must hope that the motives which swayed me will be my shield. The Provisional Government needed all the moral support obtainable after a revolutionary hurricane that shook society to its base and left everything at first portentous and trembling. In such an exigency hours, moments, were important, and the United States are felt as a power in the world.

" I am not unaware that the course I have pursued departs from diplomatic usage and separates me for the time being from the European Diplomatic Corps, accredited like myself to the late Government of France." [1]

Rush duly had his reward in President Polk's written approval, which was repeated in a Message to Congress (April 3). Both Houses likewise offered their congratulations and passed a resolution recognizing the sister Republic.

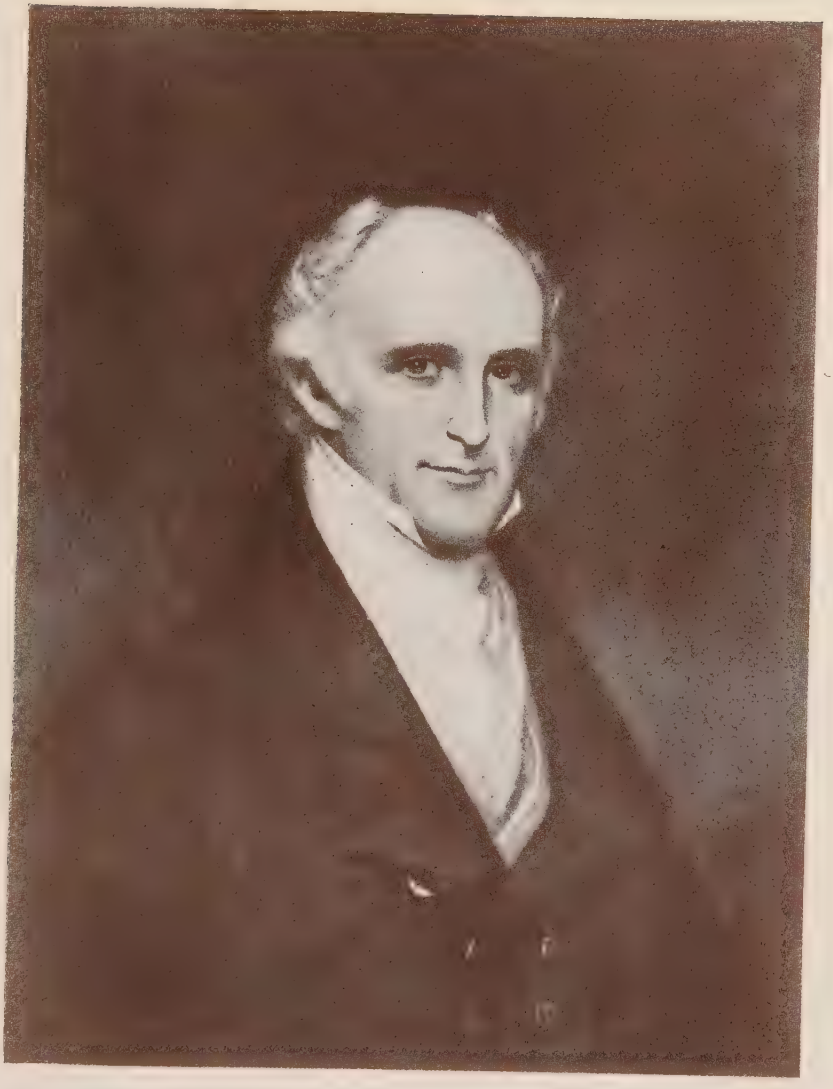
Oddly enough, at that very moment, in Paris, Rush was receiving for transmission a previous letter from the President. It was addressed to his " great and good friend," King Louis Philippe, condoling with him on the lamented death of the Princess Adelaide. It was wisely decided to suppress these condolences for the present.

On March 29 the Minister reported : " No tumults have occurred in Paris since I last wrote to you—no open breaches of the least of any kind."

The National Guard had been raised to 190,000 men.

" The shock, almost as universal as instantaneous, to the

[1] Rush became instantly deluged by letters of congratulation from grateful and optimistic republicans. In the fullness of her heart a Madame Parmentier offered to send the Minister an engraved portrait of a certain distinguished American named George Washington, which had belonged to her father! Rush refused the generous gift on the ground that there were already two such portraits in the Legation.



RICHARD RUSH.

governments and thrones of Europe, including even Austria and Prussia, as soon as the news of what happened in France reached them, has had the natural effect in assuring France that she is not likely at present to be attacked from without. This leaves her more exclusively the command of her time and means for the work she has at home."

The American Minister described the magnificent response of the French people to Lamartine's manifesto, intimating that, as the Provisional Government lacked funds,

" workmen are on all sides giving up a day's wages in the week as an offering to the State. The extent to which it has been done is very great, and it still goes on. Peasants in the country are giving up their silver forks, spoons and very heirlooms to the public service. . . . Admirals in the navy have renounced portions of their pay or emoluments. Even milliners and needlewomen, the worst paid of all here as everywhere, desire that a portion of their hard earnings should be received by the Republic."

Rush proudly took the President's letter and read it to M. Lamartine, now installed in power, whose " wisdom, temper and statesmanship " the American could not praise too highly.[1] On April 27 he presented Polk's letter to the members of the new Provisional Government, and three weeks later he offered the Congressional resolutions to the Assembly, a committee of which body

" asked me informally whether it was not the first time in our history that both Houses of Congress had offered their congratulations to any foreign nation. I replied that I remembered no other instance. In saying this I was not unaware that in 1795 our Minister to France brought out with him on his arrival letters from the Secretary of State to the Committee of Public Safety in answer to a communication from that Committee to Congress, and that each branch of our legislature passed a resolution under which the President was requested to answer the communication."

Yet on May 8 Rush was to taste a passing bitterness. His idol, Lamartine, failed him. The Minister of Foreign Affairs under the late Provisional Government made an elaborate

[1] Lamartine, alas, afterwards became a violent anti-American and wrote a pamphlet which provoked Minister Bigelow's indignation.

report of the foreign relations of France since the February revolution, but in the course of this document never once did he allude to Rush's act of recognition. How had this happened ? A distinguished caller at the Legation suggested that Lamartine had forgotten it. Rush remarked that that was "impossible." His caller then said that perhaps Lamartine's silence might be due to a reluctance to touch the sensibility of England. How ? Surely even if France wished to keep in with England how could England object to a reference to the American envoy ? Let the omission pass.

Nevertheless, Rush could hardly fail to be deeply hurt. He was to have still further testimony that Parisian political mobs, once roused, are not easily quieted. On May 20 he wrote to Buchanan :

"Another revolution has occurred here which overset for a few hours the existing Government. Monday the 15th there was a debate on the Poles. A crowd marched to the Assembly and was allowed by 'treachery' of some of the National Guards to pass.

"In the end its desperate bands burst into the Assembly, stopped its deliberations, drove the members from their seats and in the temporary prostration of its authority actually proclaimed from the tribune a new Provisional Government. The violence and consternation of the scene in the hall equalled for a while anything that occurred on 24th February in the Chamber when the Monarchy was overthrown."

But the conspirators did not succeed, although they took temporary possession of the Hôtel de Ville. Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin rode about on horseback all day haranguing the mob in the streets. The National Guard returned to its duty. Rush's comment is significant :

"That so criminal an enterprise should have been carried on to success by a handful of persons calling themselves the true Democracy of France, in the face of 900 representatives just elected by her thirty-five millions of people under universal suffrage, awakens anxious thoughts for the future."

The American envoy had, as we shall see, full grounds for anxiety.

All through the crisis Rush did his best to advise the republican leaders, who were formulating a constitution.

"Besides giving all the circulation in my power to the valuable elementary principles laid down in your despatch of March 31, I have otherwise endeavoured to give every publicity to the elucidation of our successful Republican system. I put into the hands of M. Chevallier, an efficient and active writer, my copy of the *Federalist*, enriched in his eyes, as in mine, by its containing MS. notes by Mr. Madison in his own hand, with which he favoured me in 1816. Of many of the sound and leading doctrines of that great work M. Chevallier has been making ample use in the French Press. Our Consul in Paris, let me say in this connection, Mr. Walsh, had previously held up to the French public, with the accustomed ability of his pen, many just and well-condensed views of our Constitution."

Rush also forwarded his countryman Adams's *Defense of the Constitution against Mr. Turgot*, further to influence the makers of the new French Constitution.

He described an evening spent with Lamartine, who, although out of power, declared he would not interfere with the Government's foreign policy, especially relating to Italy.

Rush tried to keep the President fully informed of events, but by June 7 confesses he is, like most intelligent Frenchmen he meets, staggered. "They scarcely know what to believe, what to predict, what to think. All must wait for results with what patience they can." He himself hoped that when a regular Constitution was adopted it would settle matters.

On June 21 a Constitution for the French Republic was submitted to the Chamber. Rush criticized the measure as aiming too much at centralization. Polk had urged Rush to suggest State Rights to the Republicans, but to no purpose. The instrument was stamped with this principle of centralization in form and spirit.

"The character, unity and nationality of France, all the prepossessions that bear upon her interior interests and administrations, and, looking beyond her borders, all her notions of strength and promptitude in Government, all her martial propensities, whether for safety or glory, turn to centralization. Hence the first words of the first chapter in her new Constitution proclaim the Republic to be 'one and indivisible.'"

Rush proceeds :

" On the evening of the 22 June I was at the house of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, then M. Bastide, with a company of members and diplomats. Nobody spoke of an insurrection. Nobody dreamed of one so near. Conversation did indeed turn upon the bad temper of the workmen and the efforts of the clubs to make it worse ; but this was all."

Yet by daylight the very next day, the *rappel* called out the National Guard and people early astir found that barricades all over Paris had sprung up during the night. All that day bloody fighting went on. General Cavaignac was given supreme executive authority and the Assembly declared Paris to be in a state of siege. For the next three days fighting continued.

" I have walked through streets where the conflict raged ; the riddled houses and battered walls show how severe it was, and the number of families thrown into mourning attest the amount of blood which has been shed. Two generals have been killed and five wounded. But order was finally restored and Cavaignac became the hero of the hour."

" The sweeping away of the late Executive Committee," pursued Rush, " is a fresh starting-point." He had to admit that Paris felt a security under martial law unknown since May 15. What virtue lay in that recurrent " whiff of grape-shot " !

The Constitution was meanwhile in the making, but Rush records " heavy doubts that it will not prove a lasting work. The Red Republic unequivocally decry *our* system as not sufficiently democratic. They denounce it without stint at their clubs, and their principal leader in the national assembly has done so there."

American institutions, indeed, enjoyed small influence or favour in Paris save by the few Republicans of the old stock like, for instance, Cavaignac himself.

And now the question arose—who was to be the first President of the Republic ?

" The bulk of the French people are altogether unused to voting for so vast a stake, and even to voting at all. They are very ignorant and highly excitable. This will expose them to being played upon in all ways by ambition taking

all forms. Louis Bonaparte and General Cavaignac are at present the most prominent candidates."

On November 4 the new Constitution was proclaimed by cannon to Paris. "May it not," exclaimed Rush piously, "need cannon for its support or be overthrown by cannon."

Six weeks later the elections were over and Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was chosen President, and Cavaignac—"brave, skilful, honest"—was badly beaten. Rush notes that this election was "the largest concentrated popular vote the world has ever beheld": 5,434,000 electors voted for the Bonaparte Prince. "But none believed in Republicanism, the masses voted for a name, and the others did not wish the prolongation of this Republic."

In the following summer Minister Rush was recalled, after two years of strenuous labour and exciting events. He took his farewell in a picturesque review of his mission intended for the President's eye.[1]

"Next to fidelity of the honour and interests of his own country and government, usage and wisdom dictate that a foreign Minister should bear himself respectfully and with all just conciliation towards the Court or Government to which he is sent. This I have ever aimed at.

"Scenes and persons have been marvellously shifting here, it is true. A monarch upon the throne in the person of Louis Philippe; a Provisional Government upon the barricades of which M. Lamartine was the moving spirit; a military chief in General Cavaignac with powers bordering upon dictatorship, to rescue France from the horrors of anarchy; next Prince Louis Napoleon, elected by a popular vote unprecedented for number in the annals of time to the first Presidency of the Republic,—these have been the successive heads of the Executive Power in this great nation,—with whom I have been in official and personal relations in exercising the diplomatic functions of my country since the summer of 1847."

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Rush was seventy-one on his return to America, and spent the remaining eight years of his life in literary pursuits, dying in 1859.

[1] Letter-book, August 30, 1849.

CHAPTER XIV

RIVES AND MASON (1849–59)

It was really unfortunate : the year 1849 was marked by a fresh diplomatic rupture between France and America. In the previous October, in far-away Mexico, Commander Carpender of the United States Navy, in command of the war steamer *Iris*, saved from imminent peril the French barque *Eugénie*, which had grounded at Rojo. The American believed that his services merited an award for salvage, which, being refused, he detained the barque for a short time. The French Consul at Vera Cruz reported the Commander's heinous conduct, and eventually the French Minister at Washington, M. Poussin, was instructed to demand an explanation and apology. The Secretary of the Navy examined into the affair and reported.

With this official report M. Poussin was highly dissatisfied, and at once wrote off on his own initiative a letter to the Secretary of State of a most arrogant character.

The President and Cabinet were naturally incensed at M. Poussin's language, especially as this was not his first offence. In the previous April he had addressed the Secretary of State about a French claim in terms he was obliged later to retract.

Poussin was therefore invited to come to Washington, from which he was just then absent on holiday, and give an explanation of his letter. At the same time Secretary Clayton wrote off to the French Foreign Minister, de Tocqueville, his own account of the incident. Clayton's reason for this was that the American Minister in Paris, Rush, had just been recalled and his successor would not probably have yet arrived. Moreover, the Secretary of State had a personal acquaintance with de Tocqueville, whose classic work on America he esteemed highly.

For the Paris mission the new Whig President, Zachary Taylor, had chosen his friend, William Cabell Rives of Vir-

ginia, the same who, twenty years before, had represented his country at the Court of Charles X and Louis Philippe.

On receiving his commission Rives had been instructed to call at London *en route* and hold a conference with Lord Palmerston over the conflicting claims to territorial sovereignty in the river San Juan in Nicaragua. This he accomplished, arriving in Paris on October 27, 1849. He found Minister Rush still there and ready to conduct him to an interview with de Tocqueville. But it so happened that just at this moment Secretary Clayton's despatch about M. Poussin arrived and was shown to Prince Louis Napoleon, who was quite shocked at the diplomatic irregularity. Under the circumstances it seemed out of the question for the American Minister to be received by the Prince-President. Rives boldly suggested that he might informally discuss the affair with de Tocqueville, having himself so recently come from Washington. The Foreign Minister agreed and met him cordially.

"He made [reported Rives] friendly allusions to my former residence here; said I was kindly remembered in France, but circumstances of a painful character had just transpired which he feared would produce a brief delay."

Clayton's letter to de Tocqueville himself announcing the breach with Poussin (September 8) gave him "equal pain and surprise; there were expressions in it and a general tone wounding to the dignity of the French Government." Consequently, the Ministry were of opinion that, pending explanations, it would be advisable to adjourn the formal reception of a new American Minister.

In reply, Rives explained that it was all a misconception. Poussin had not been *summoned*, but *invited* to Washington. So far from being disliked, the French envoy was highly esteemed by Clayton.

This Tocqueville was prepared to accept, but pointed out that the American Secretary of State had written to himself personally—a proceeding both unusual and embarrassing. Whereupon Rives related Clayton's fear that Minister Rush would have left Paris and his successor not have arrived. Tocqueville, in the end, admitted the explanation, answered

the Secretary of State's letter, and wrote to Poussin censuring his conduct. In consequence the French envoy came home and M. Bois le Comte was appointed his successor at Washington.

When, on November 8, Louis Napoleon, the Prince-President, received Minister Rives at the Élysée he could not forbear telling him that if the late unpleasantness had occurred under a monarchy, any new American envoy would have been prevented from so quickly resuming diplomatic relations. But as a Republican dealing with a Republic, and such a Republic as the United States, he cheerfully took the first step. An auspicious beginning!

It was lucky, however, that the indiscreet Clayton's proposal to print his correspondence with Tocqueville was nipped in the bud. Rives assured him that such a proceeding would be most damaging, and reluctantly Clayton abandoned it.

From the first, Rives could not fail to be a close and curious spectator of Louis Napoleon's administration, in whose stability the world at large had little faith, and which was exposed to the constant and assiduous Royalist, and (it was believed) Imperialist plotting. The President's first annual message in November 1849 gave rise to inquietude. "The rumours," wrote Rives, "of a meditated *coup d'état* led many persons to see in the message the precursor of some movement of that sort." But the time was not ripe and the fears of the Republicans for the present subsided.

De Tocqueville became displaced by an artillery general, Lahitte; and there were other ministerial changes. One of Louis Napoleon's schemes—perhaps his best title to fame—was the further beautifying of Paris. This involved the occasional cutting down of unsightly trees. Unhappily, certain of these latter happened to be so-called "Trees of Liberty." An insidious motive was suspected. During the winter the workmen were mobbed and inflammatory speeches were made. On February 4 the American Minister reported that "a large and tumultuous crowd collected in the Square St. Martin around a threatened tree" and for a time a riot appeared imminent. Explanations were made, and the crowd dispersed.

As the year wore on the activities of the Royalists and Bonapartists increased and nobody believed that the existing situation would endure for long. In September a Legitimist circular was issued, stating that—

"The Comte de Chambord . . . has determined to plant the standard of his party in France on the divine and indefeasible rights of hereditary monarchy without reference to popular sanction of any sort."

This, strange as it may seem, found many enthusiastic applauders.

The Imperialists at least did not go as far as that. Yet it was well known that the sentiment of the Army was Imperialistic. At a cavalry review at Versailles there were loud cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" and "*Vive Napoléon!*" when the President appeared, and the offenders were not punished. They were not even rebuked by their officers. And in many other directions Louis Napoleon was manifestly consolidating his popularity.

While awaiting the expected Coup d'État, Rives undertook an enquiry into the domestic economy of his Legation.

On returning to the French capital after so long an absence, he could hardly fail to be struck by the rise in the cost of living and by the disparity between the expenses of the Legation and the sums allowed by Congress for its upkeep. In his passage through London he had noted the same grievance there. Ministers at both capitals were badly underpaid.

"The three items of house-rent, fuel and carriage-hire nearly absorb his whole pay, leaving him dependent upon his private means for the ordinary subsistence and household service of his family; if to this be added entertainment, the burden is insupportable, except to a man of very large private fortune, to which, alas, few of our public men in America belong.[1]

[1] Daniel Webster had lately been appointed Secretary of State and Rives hoped that he would turn a favourable ear to representations which had failed with his predecessors. The single item of postage made heavy inroads on the Minister's own pocket, for the allowance was absurdly small and letters between Paris and London cost eighty centimes (sixteen cents) an ounce and one franc fourteen centimes (twenty-three cents) to the United States.

" ' Social intercourse ' with the members of the Diplomatic Corps, and *à fortiori* with the members of the Governments to which he is accredited, both as a means of information and of personal influence, is expressly enjoined by the standing instructions which an American Minister receives when he leaves his native shores. And yet how is this intercourse to be maintained on terms consistent with his self-respect or the dignity of his country, but by reciprocating acts of hospitality ?

" Paris and London are now the great centres of our international intercourse, as they are of the business and politics of the world. The United States are the only country which applies a scale of salaries indiscrimately.

" The British representative in Paris receives a salary of £10,000, a large furnished hotel and an additional allowance of £4,000 every three or four years to renew the furniture or in other directions. Ought not the American Minister to have one-third of this to enable him to maintain a reciprocal social intercourse ' equally removed from the meanness of parsimony on the one hand and the ostentation of extravagance on the other ' ? "

The expenses of living in Paris, Rives explained,

" may be judged by the price of some of the common articles which enters its consumption. Butchers' meat, for example, was fifteen cents per lb., and double that price for the delicate portions ; ham from thirty to forty cents the pound, and a pair of fowls from nine francs or $1.75. Consequently, the ordinary food of a household costs $8,000 annually, $3,000 more for the hire of servants and their clothing, lights and washing. Carriage hire runs from $1,200 to $1,400, and fuel, $1,200. House-rent cost $3,000 to $4,000 per annum and the Minister's personal expenses, $3,000.

" The United States are now one of the most powerful nations in the world, and the first pride of the country requires that its *equality* should be recognized by some of the more usual outward and conventional signs of national influence and power, as well as by intrinsic and dormant energies."

All this was very true and unanswerable. But there was a type of Congressman—unhappily then very numerous—who set his face like flint against any increase in the cost of American representation abroad and who believed, as one of them in fact said, that " a true American should be dis-

couraged from any temptation to yield to foreign vanity and ostentation and encouraged to live in nowise different from any other simple American citizen sojourning for business purposes abroad." This argument was, be it noted, never shared by any American Minister save one—E. B. Washburne, some twenty years later—and it is to be feared that he was then addressing his political constituents in Illinois, rather than the Department of State and the Government of his country.

At all events, Rives and his fellow Ministers were afforded no relief, which was deferred for another generation.

The new head of the French Foreign Office, Lahitte, soon showed that he was not overburdened with love and admiration for American institutions. For in the Chamber (November 28) he made a speech in which he referred to certain laws on the American statute-book as " little less than barbarous and savage," adding that the efforts of England and France to induce the States to " return into the ways of civilization and respect for humanity " had been ineffectual, but greater success would come when these States should comprehend that they were " out of the pale of the laws of all nations."

On reading these remarks Rives was incensed and at once called on the Minister. American laws, he told him, might conceivably be improper ; but such language was insulting, doubly so when it emanated from a leading member of a foreign Government. If it came to inhumanity, what about France, and the denial of its soil to any of the Bourbon family or to any political refugee ? What about the high-handed imprisonment of Abd-el-Kader, in violation of the most solemn engagements ? The Foreign Minister, perceiving that he had been indiscreet, promptly apologized for his language. One was often betrayed into exaggeration, he said, when addressing popular assemblies. The French felt very strongly about certain transatlantic proceedings, but they wished at all times to spare American feelings.

Perhaps for this reason the measures announced by Louis Napoleon in his Message of November 1850 to aid in defending Cuba from American adventurers were, by arrangement with the British Government, entrusted to the joint naval forces of the two countries. Yet no allusion to this concerted

action was made in the Queen's Speech, lest American susceptibilities be aroused.

Rives's opinion was that "unceasing and systematic as are the efforts to embroil the United States and France with each other, I believe they may be frustrated by a policy of mutual frankness, cordiality and manliness on the part of both Governments." In October he wrote:

"Dining with the President a few days ago at St. Cloud, he introduced the subject himself in conversation with me. He suggested the idea of some joint agreement between the United States, England and France in regard to Cuba. I did not know how far he might have adopted the idea of confirming Spanish dominion by joint guarantee of the Powers."

Rives said he had no powers or instructions on that head. But later he told M. Baroche, the new Foreign Minister, that there existed insuperable objections to America's guaranteeing the sovereignty of Spain over Cuba. The Frenchman replied that that was not the French idea, which was merely to prevent Cuba's being absorbed by one of the Powers and in order to calm public opinion.

In January 1851 came the resignation of the French Ministry and the formation of a fresh Cabinet. All through that year the vexed question of Cuba emerges.

"I have already had the occasion to mention to you [wrote Rives, September 8] the evidences I had seen of the great anxiety of the English Legation here that the United States should put themselves invidiously in the controversy between France and the Sandwich Islands, while England herself had the clearest and strongest grounds for remonstrance in the formal Treaty stipulations, by which France was bound directly to her to respect the independence of those islands. And yet so desirous has she been to avoid the risk of giving offence to France and of transferring that ungracious office to us that she has never to this day, so far as I have been able to learn, uttered a single word of protest or remonstrance against the proceedings of the French Government in that affair, through professing to us the strongest disapprobation of them.

"I have every reason to believe that, pursuing steadily the

same policy, she [England] has done all she could to instil into the French Government distrust respecting the supposed designs of the United States upon the island of Cuba, and so compromise France's friendly relations with the United States."

Meanwhile, Louis Napoleon's imperialism was taking definite form. The repeal of the Suffrage law brought on a fresh resignation of the Ministry. And only six weeks later came the Coup d'État.

"The *dénouement* towards which events have been rapidly tending for some weeks past was brought upon Paris yesterday morning. A decree of the President was placarded in the streets by which he assumes to dissolve the National Assembly and the Council of State, declaring universal suffrage to be re-established and proclaiming martial law. The Palace of the National Assembly was surrounded by troops so as to prevent the entry of members and considerable bodies of troops were also stationed at all the principal points of communication.

"Several of the leading members of the National Assembly were arrested at their houses in the night of the 1st–2nd and were immediately sent to the fortress of Vincennes.

"This morning they have been transferred to the more distant prison of Ham. Among them were Generals Changarnier, Cavaignac, Lamoricière and Bedeau, and Col. Charres and M. Thiers.

"Two hundred members of the assembly collected in the Mairie of the X^e^ arrondissement under Daru were arrested by a military detachment and kept at a barracks all night under surveillance. Paris is tranquil."[1]

Rives added next day (December 4):

"In the course of yesterday some partial attempts were made to organize a popular resistance by the Mountain. Barricades were formed in the streets of the Faubourg St. Antoine, but were destroyed by the soldiers, one deputy being killed and three others wounded."

Strong measures of repression had been taken. Both the High Court and the Court of Cassation had been dissolved, and the Paris Press was muzzled.

[1] Rives to Webster, December 3, 1851.

"Placed as Paris thus is, under the absolute *régime* of a state of siege, it is exceedingly difficult to arrive at conclusions beyond one's own observation. Time will show what are the chances of success of this high-handed and illegal career upon which Louis Napoleon has entered."

Nevertheless, it was significant that the Minister reports further street fighting and bloodshed and adds:

"I have abstained from appearing at the usual weekly receptions of the President. I felt it did not become me, representing as I did a free Constitutional Republic and a people imbued with a sacred hereditary attachment to liberty, to lend personal or official sanction to measures by which all those guarantees had been trodden under foot."

He would therefore wait for the decision of the French people themselves before giving his official adhesion "to what has taken place here."

The days of stress went on, but the Government was firm, and the other diplomats, even the Swiss Minister, gave in. Rives alone held aloof.

"In pursuing this course, I have taken counsel, not merely of the feelings and sentiments natural to the bosom of an American citizen under such circumstances, but also of those higher considerations of principle and duty which should control the conduct of a public agent.

"It seemed that it would be to betray the cause for one in my representative capacity to go forward with indecent haste to salute a dictatorial power which had risen by violence on the ruins of a written republican constitution, however defective."

On the other hand, the President, having appealed to the nation to ratify his illegal acts and surrender his tenure, could not justly complain of Rives's conduct, which the latter hoped would meet with Webster's approbation.

The issue was not long left in doubt. A few days before Christmas the French plebiscite had declared its judgment. Seven and a half million Frenchmen were for the Prince-President, and only 640,000 against him. There could be no further excuse for abstention, and accordingly on New Year Day, 1852, Rives presented himself at the Élysée and was

as cordially received there as were the other diplomatic envoys.

In a few weeks there came the various decrees of the President, the creation of a Ministry of Police and a Ministry of State ; the Orleans property was confiscated, and an election of members of the Corps Législatif was ordered.

It could hardly fail to be a little awkward for Minister Rives about this time to receive a copy of the *New York Herald* containing Webster's very downright letters to himself relating to the crisis, and still more awkward to find them gleefully translated into the *Moniteur* at the very moment when the triumphant Prince Louis Napoleon was solicitously enquiring from Rives if he had received any comments from Washington ! It took some *aplomb* to carry off his embarrassment !

But President Fillmore could not hold off much longer, and his personal letter congratulating Louis Napoleon duly arrived and gave much satisfaction to Napoleon when Rives presented it.

" One great difference [remarked the Prince, in the course of a talk] in the habits and usages of our two nations is—that in the United States the people do almost everything for themselves and call upon their Government for very little. In France, on the contrary, from time immemorial the people have been in the habit of relying on the Government for everything, and this renders a strong central power indispensable."

Throughout all his despatches to the Secretary of State preceding and following the Coup d'État the American Minister in Paris had been very candid and outspoken—sometimes a little dangerously so, considering the risk of publication which attended them. In one of his official letters he used certain expressions rather offensive perhaps to French susceptibilities, and the new French Minister at Washington was instructed to call on the Secretary of State and lodge a complaint. As a result of this, Webster directed Rives to make an apology, which the latter, in a very able despatch (March 31, 1852), declined to do.

" This despatch [writes his grandson] was so unanswerable that it was never acknowledged or answered by Mr.

Webster (who was in failing health), though it might have given occasion for Rives's recall." [1]

Rives remained at the Paris Legation for another year, long enough to see Louis Napoleon Emperor of the French and the advent of the beautiful Mademoiselle de Montijo as his Imperial Consort.

It was a singular experience for the man who in 1830 had been a spectator of "the most wonderful revolution in the history of the world" to return to witness the Napoleonic Coup d'État of 1851.

"The period of my mission [he wrote, when tendering his resignation, March 10, 1853] commencing under very unpropitious circumstances, growing out of the diplomatic rupture of 1848, and continuing through a series of political changes and revolutions in this country, has been marked by many delicate and embarrassing questions which have been presented here in the relations between this Government and that of the United States."

In the treatment of these questions and in his general official and social behaviour Rives had shown all that ability which had been expected of him, and had in particular demonstrated his characteristic independence of thought and speech.

Pending the arrival of a new Minister, who it was rumoured would be John Young Mason, another Virginian judge, the Legation was left in charge of Shelton Sanford, the First Secretary. This young gentleman was ambitious of shining as a professional diplomatist, and indeed came to fill an important European mission for many years. But to-day he is chiefly remembered in Paris as the ardent but misguided champion of one of Secretary W. L. Marcy's diplomatic reforms. Sanford proudly called himself a Jeffersonian democrat and was fond of shocking aristocratic and Anglophil circles by what he took to be honest republicanism and plain speaking about kings, kingship and "flunkeyism" which obliged Lady Cowley at the British Embassy sometimes to explain to her guests that the American Chargé was really clever, but *un peu opiniâtré*. No sooner was he established as Chargé than Sanford began to compose lengthy despatches to the Secretary of State, taking all Europe for his province,

[1] Letter to the author from W. C. Rives of Washington, D.C., June 1927.

but with especial reference to England, as if desirous of exhibiting to Marcy, the new Secretary of State, his true diplomatic mettle. As an example of one of these effusions one may quote the following (March 31, 1853):

"A deputation from the merchants of London, of a rather unusual character, arrived here a few days ago charged by constituents with the mission of delivering an address to the Emperor of the French disavowing the existence of hostile sentiments in England towards France and the Emperor and expressing an ardent desire for the continuance of friendly relations between the two countries. I enclose a number of the *Moniteur* containing the address and also the Emperor's reply. *I do not think that this proceeding is regarded here as in keeping with the ancient prudence of England or altogether consistent with the dignity of a great people.*" [1]

On another occasion Sanford let it be known that he thought England was basely truckling to Napoleon, whose revival of pomp and flummery filled the American with disdain.

No one was better pleased than Sanford when the Secretary of State took up the question of diplomatic dress for its representatives abroad, which had slumbered since Jackson's day.

Sanford read in the newspapers that the Secretary of State had issued a circular on the subject.[2] But he did not wait to receive it in order to achieve the special distinction amongst the Diplomatic Corps which he craved. On August 15 the fête, then called the "Saint-Napoléon," was observed as a national holiday. There was a reception by the Emperor, a diplomatic dinner by the Foreign Minister (Drouyn de Lhuys) and a soirée afterwards at the Tuileries. At this latter function Sanford boldly announced his intention of appearing in plain evening dress, instead of the modified uniform favoured by successive American envoys.

[1] Sanford mentions that the Emperor also received another deputation from England—that of an English company formed for "effecting a junction of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by the Isthmus of Darien."

[2] Marcy, serving under Pierce, caused a ripple of amusement and annoyance by his famous circular order of June 1, 1853, that all our representatives were to confine their sartorial ambitions to "the simple costume of an American citizen." The diplomatic uniforms which had been developed by the practice of our Ministers were accordingly discarded for trousers and frock or evening coats; we became *sans culottes*, and the long-lived joke about the American Minister who was mistaken for a waiter was soon born.—C. R. Fish: *American Diplomacy*.

"The position in which I found myself [he explained to his chief in Washington] was one of some delicacy and embarrassment. The instructions had not been received by me from the Department; they had, however, been published in the newspapers of the United States, republished and commented upon by leading journals here and throughout Europe and had been the frequent subject of conversation in political circles where I was present. They had received the approbation of our countrymen abroad, and were in accordance with my own sentiments. As such a change could not but attract attention, I esteemed it due as an act of courtesy to inform the Ministers that I should appear in 'the simple dress of an American citizen,' that I felt persuaded that my so appearing would neither be misinterpreted nor misunderstood, and that this change of dress or return to the original simplicity which had distinguished our first diplomatic representative here would not be regarded as signifying any change in the sentiments of the Government and people of the United States towards France, whose desire was to cultivate the most amicable relations with our ancient Ally."

In reply Drouyn de Lhuys informed the American Chargé d'affaires that no one in France could reasonably complain and that he would be most happy to see him in the simple garb of an American citizen, whatever that might be.

Nevertheless, it soon appeared that Sanford's act of courage by no means had the approbation of all his compatriots in Paris, one of whom did not scruple to describe it as "indecent." Sanford naturally failed to see the indecency of it. If he had proposed to appear at the Tuileries in a state of partial nudity it would have been another matter. As it was, he had gone fully and decorously clothed. He saw with regret the new Emperor returning to effete ceremonies, costumes and decorations and the bestowal of a host of pensions to court parasites. The will of Napoleon I was solemnly resurrected and it was proposed to fulfil all its provisions at a cost of eight million francs to the French Treasury. There was no sign of economy; more splendid functions were in prospect, and gold lace alone would absorb a round million. It was all very sad.[1]

So our democratic philosopher drove about for weeks in his

[1] It gave him pleasure to read in *Galignani*: "The most conspicuous figure at the court ball last evening was Mr. Sanford, the American Chargé d'affaires. *Simplex munditiis.*"

black coat and white tie, attending court ceremonies and hugely enjoying the attention he attracted.

On January 8, 1854, the new head of the Legation arrived. Less than a fortnight afterwards Minister Mason dined with the Emperor and Empress.

"Although the scene was entirely new to me and extreme ceremony observed, I feel gratified to say my reception by both was characterized by dignity, courtesy and kindness, and thus my official relations with the Imperial Government of Napoleon III were established."

But at the very moment that Mason was thus enjoying himself at the Tuileries his Secretary of Legation was busy composing his letter of resignation to the Secretary of State. And no wonder! In spite of his protests and appeals the new Minister had actually insisted on going to the palace in a cocked hat, knee-breeches, silk stockings, with a sword dangling at his side! But let us read the sad story in Sanford's own words, his reasons "for an apparent abrupt resolution at a moment when it might be presumed that my long experience here ought to render my services particularly useful to the new Minister."

"I advised you of my first appearance at Court in the dress of an *American Citizen*, on which occasion the Emperor received me with marked attention, which, with the friendly tenor of his conversation, confirmed in my mind the impression made by his Minister that no objection would, or could be made, and that none was felt.

"I have since followed this usage on all occasions, whether of a festive or more formal character, and I have had no reason to doubt the propriety or the expediency of that course, but the contrary. Mr. Mason having informed me that it was his determination, after presenting his letter of credence, to appear at Court in a uniform, renders my further official intercourse with the Court impracticable, unless I return to the regulation which by your circular is withdrawn and (which I may be permitted to say is also of some weight) which conveys the apparent disapprobation of the Government to the course which under its instructions I have followed.

"Unable therefore to continue the usual official intercourse, that the public service at the Legation may experience no embarrassment, I consider it my duty to retire."

Here was a pretty scandal to run the rounds of the Paris Chancelleries and the diplomatic drawing-rooms.

"Under the instructions about Court Dress and uniform," reported the Minister in turn, "I understand that my predecessors at this Court felt it their duty to wear a uniform dress on certain occasions, and, in the discretion given them, modified the form prescribed according to their own sense of propriety."

Mason quoted the official instructions:

"'Each Minister will be left to regulate the matter according to his own sense of propriety.'

"I carefully considered these instructions. They do not prescribe nor do they forbid the adoption of uniform dress in performing the ceremonies of the Court nor in social intercourse, but leave it to the representative of the country, who is on the spot and can judge of the exigencies of the circumstances, to decide for himself."

He did not, therefore, propose to wound the Court's pride or disregard its wishes.

"My own predilections were decidedly in favour of the simple dress of an American citizen. But the form of Government here is imperial; the observance of ceremony and etiquette at the Court has steadily increased since the Emperor's accession to power, and is now extreme. Of the thirty delegations accredited to this Court from other countries than the United States, whether Imperial, Royal or Republican, the Ministers appear at Court in uniform, giving external evidence that they belong to the Diplomatic Corps. Every citizen or subject in attending Court is required to appear in a court dress. The political institutions of France recognize a classification of society, and each appears at Court with the distinctive evidence of his class, so that it may be known to what privileges he is entitled. The Diplomatic Corps is a recognized class with large privileges of respect and national hospitality accorded to it by the Government, and to secure their observance each member of this Corps from other countries exhibits the evidence of his belonging to it by his dress, varying according to the orders of his Government or his own sense of propriety.

"I became satisfied by my own observation, by conversation with the Minister, and by information from various

sources entitled to my implicit respect, that the form of the Government, its usages and regulations, required that I should modify my dress when I went to Court on such occasions. Otherwise I would offend the sensibilities of those whom it was my duty to conciliate, debar myself from promoting the interests of my country, and thus impair my usefulness as her representative because of a question of dress which I had no right to make with the Emperor's Government and which my own country had made it my duty to decide for myself.

" So I attended at the Tuileries in a simple uniform dress and presented to the Emperor and Empress a large number of my countrymen and the ladies of their families."

Mason regretted that there was not a coincidence of opinion " between us "—himself and his First Secretary—although he did not question the propriety of Sanford's decision for himself, while acting as Chargé.

All this was excellent reasoning, and sensible enough. Which side would Secretary Marcy take in the dispute ? He wrote to Sanford commending his general official conduct, and suggesting the reconsideration of his resignation. To the Minister he administered no rebuke, nor did he order him back into the " garb of an evangelical minister of religion endeavouring, but without success, to approximate to the sartorial elegance of a chop-house waiter."

Sanford, before his departure for his new post at Brussels, has his final epistolary fling :

" Our new Minister, an officer of superior rank, coming directly from the Government, ignores the spirit of your instructions and what has been done under them, and adopts a course directly opposite and restores the usage which has been abolished.

" It can hardly be supposed that two persons charged by the Government to execute its wishes acting under precisely the same instructions could, with a due regard to their true intent and meaning, adopt a course so directly—if not absurdly—in contrast unless the officer had misunderstood his Government and was disapproved by it."

At all events, such, he thought, was the inference drawn (perhaps too willingly) by the French Government.

So Sanford thought it best to resign. This wish, however,

"should not, I think, have subjected me to the suggestion that I could have wished you to deprive my successor of the discretion given to me, and still less that he should make my example the rule of his conduct. I take no credit to myself for the example, for the reason that it did not originate with me, but was pointed out by our instructions to both the Minister and myself. A circumstance which [added Sanford bitterly] leaves me at liberty to add to your own *my* entire approbation of it drawn from practical experience of its operation, and my regret that it should ever again have been departed from."

It was a curious episode; but the question of Court dress was to settle itself, so far as France was concerned, even before the downfall of the imperial régime.[1]

In 1854 Mason became, with Minister Buchanan from London and Minister Soulé from Madrid, a joint signatory of the famous Ostend Manifesto, concerning the sale of Cuba by Spain to the United States, which created great opposition in Europe and received little support in America.

Soulé, the real author of the plan, was *persona non grata* to the Emperor Napoleon, and, in spite of his diplomatic character, being without a French passport, was arrested at Calais. Not without considerable difficulty did his colleague Mason secure a permit for him to cross France on his way back to his post at Madrid. Otherwise, he would have been forced to travel by sea, which he detested.

Mason's term as Minister to France coincided with the Crimean War, and he had therefore constant and innumerable representations to make during that conflict regarding the rights of neutrals. He could, however, obtain little satisfaction on this head from Drouyn de Lhuys, who resigned in

[1] On "the glaring conspicuousness" of the American Ambassador's attire Mr. Choate once remarked to Whitelaw Reid in London, when they were standing in a line of Ambassadors: "At a Court this republican simplicity dodge of ours about 'plain clothes' is the most impertinent piece of swagger in the world. . . . We single them out from everybody else in a room with a thousand people." In reporting this to the President, Mr. Reid naïvely added, "Personally, I don't dislike it in the least; but there never was a case where demagogues so thoroughly defeated their own desires."—Cortissoz: *Whitelaw Reid.*

May 1855, and hoped to have happier dealings with his successor, Count Walewski.

"He is [reported Mason] by birth a Pole, reputed to be a son of Napoleon I, and has always been devoted to his native country. He has not been at all distinguished in the service of France until the accession of Napoleon III."

But it was not at all easy to negotiate a treaty in favour of neutral rights so long as the alliance between France and England lasted. Mason hoped for something better when the war ended, but the months passed and still no new Franco-American Treaty appeared practicable.

During 1857 the Morey case caused much excited feeling in the American colony in Paris, even producing a wave of popular emotion on the other side of the Atlantic. Charles Morey was a young inventor, who, with his wife, had come to France to exploit a number of rubber and other patents by which he expected to make a vast fortune. Unhappily, he got into difficulties with his creditors and eventually found himself inside the debtors' prison at Clichy. One evening, while endeavouring to obtain a little fresh air at his window, he was observed by a guard, who, mistaking Morey's movements, and misunderstanding his own orders, promptly shot him dead. Minister Mason promptly took up the case, and his memorandum to the French Government offers an excellent example both of his power as an advocate and of his florid, almost Dickensian, eloquence. Pleading for the young wife, Mason wrote:

"In the morning of life she has lost a husband who loved and cherished her. Her domestic affections are crushed. She is left to struggle with hard and complex business affairs and exacting creditors, because he who was her stay and support, who, as long as he lived, supported her in elegance and comfort, and who would have continued to do so, whatever might be the complication of his affairs, was cruelly taken from her by an act which has caused her so much anguish, and which, for want of having herself or receiving from others the aid and skill in managing his affairs, he would have brought to the duty, has caused her so much loss. This loss, she is assured by the high word of the Emperor of France,

shall be indemnified to her. That the indemnity can make her forget the happiness she has lost, or fully and completely repair the injury which she has sustained, is not to be expected; but it may, as a substantial proof of sympathy and as a security against suffering or the necessity of appeals to charity, be soothing to her wounded heart."

Marshal Vaillant was charged with making a settlement, and eventually the widow was awarded 76,000 francs. But the creditors intervened, and for a time it looked as though they would confiscate the money. Again Mason exerted himself, and they had to be content with a share in Morey's patents, which, it is believed, more than covered the amount of their claims. The too-zealous soldier was punished, and the bereaved Mrs. Morey returned to America with the bulk of her indemnity and an autograph letter from the compassionate Empress in her pocket.

In January 1858 Europe was startled by the issue of the famous Orsini plot. To Secretary Lewis Cass, Mason reported (January 17):

"On the evening of the 14th an attempt was made to assassinate the Emperor. He was in a carriage with the Empress and one of his aides-de-camp driving to the French Opera in the rue Le Peletier. As his carriage approached the entrance, it was detained for a moment by another carriage and as the obstacle was removed, and his carriage advanced, then successive explosions followed. They were found to proceed from grenades, thrown into the street, charged with missiles, and exploding as they struck. The surrounding crowd was very dense, and more than one hundred persons were wounded and killed; but happily their Majesties escaped without material injury. They entered the Opera House and remained during the performance, exhibiting the greatest self-possession. Indeed, the Emperor's coolness most probably saved his life, for, after the first explosion, he was urged to descend, and, finding that his attendant, more agitated than himself, had neglected to lower the steps, remained in the carriage. If he had been on the street when the succeeding explosions occurred, he would hardly have escaped."

"It is believed [added Mason] that the plot was formed abroad and embraced no Frenchmen in France." This, as

we know, proved to be the case and led to complications in England.

Mason, for all his ability and good qualities, cannot be said to have acquired all that personal refinement that one expects to find in the higher social circles of Europe. Several stories concerning him long had currency in Paris and are not yet wholly forgotten. He found gloves an embarrassment, and on one occasion, while dancing with the Empress, actually placed his bare hand on her Majesty's white shoulders, a proceeding which caused a shiver to run through the august frame and likewise through the august company. This was bad enough, but the incident was magnified by a certain scurrilous print and created a mild scandal. Another failing on the part of "the Judge" (as his staff always called him) was even more heinous. He was, like many occupants of the American bench of the period, addicted to the use of tobacco, not in the form of cigars, but of the masticatory variety. He once observed that the appointments of the palace were indeed beautiful, and would have been perfect but for the lamentable absence of spittoons. When taking part in a card game it was the envoy's amiable habit to moisten the cards from time to time with his thumb, which so offended the ladies of the imperial circle that immediately after this treatment they called for a fresh pack or feigned some excuse for discontinuing the game.[1] All this could not fail to detract somewhat from the American Minister's complete social eligibility.

Nevertheless, Mason's many friends and diplomatic colleagues were shocked to learn one day (October 3, 1859) that the American Minister had expired that morning as the result of an apoplectic stroke. The Court was absent at Biarritz, but, by authority of a despatch from the Emperor, suitable honours were paid to the Minister's remains, which were embalmed and carried back to America.

[1] Bigelow records: "Sumner told me that Mason, our Minister, is not much encouraged to attend the card-parties at the Tuileries, because he is very awkward in the use of his right hand since his paralytic stroke, and the habit of putting his fingers to his mouth, which is always surcharged with tobacco spittle, and then to his cards, soon spoils his pack, besides rendering it disgusting to those unaccustomed to this popular Virginia decoction." —See *Retrospects of an Active Life*.

For the five ensuing months the affairs of the Legation were conducted by a young South Carolinian, W. R. Calhoun, while observers in Europe saw with concern the country he represented drifting gradually into civil war.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Rives returned home to fill a high position as the Nestor in politics of his native State and was one of the leaders chosen just before Lincoln's inauguration to confer with the President-Elect on the burning question of Southern Secession. He died in 1866.

CHAPTER XV

FAULKNER AND DAYTON (1860–64)

President Buchanan showed little alacrity in appointing a successor to Minister Mason. The fact was, he had grave domestic difficulties on his hands, and might have allowed young Calhoun to remain Chargé at Paris till the close of his administration, had not pressure been put upon him by the party leaders of both sides. But if the Secessionists expected any real political advantage to accrue from having a Southerner in Paris for the next fifteen months their hopes were considerably modified at the outset by the choice of the Secretary of State. Cass, though a Democrat, was a Northerner, and himself a former Minister to France. Cass distrusted the Calhoun family and secured the appointment of Charles James Faulkner, another Virginian lawyer and judge, who was strongly opposed to secession.

Faulkner left America hoping earnestly that the political disruption of his country would be avoided, and also that he would be able to conclude the long-delayed treaty of commerce and navigation with France. Fifteen months later he was able to ponder from a prison cell upon the frustration of both these hopes.

Soon after the new Minister's arrival in February 1860, he was invited to assist at the opening of the Corps Législatif, an invitation which drew forth from him the following remarks characteristic of a Jeffersonian democrat of the old school.

"Whilst a legislative assembly here, compared with the institutions of my own country, is clothed with very limited powers and can scarcely be regarded as a fair exponent of the Popular Will, I shall, nevertheless, witness the inauguration with all the interest which an elective body, at least in part, and professing to speak as the voice of the People, is calculated, under an Imperial Government, to awaken in the heart of an American Citizen."

Subsequently he expressed himself as gratified at the

experience, several orators having actually referred to "the Popular Will" and the honour and dignity of the country.

On Sunday, March 4, Faulkner was received by the Emperor, but little passed except formalities, and it was not until many months later that an intimate conversation took place. On that occasion Napoleon was cordial and complimentary. He said that, during his brief visit to the United States, he had been most deeply impressed with the energy, activity and vitality which pervaded every class of society and every department of business, so much so that when he returned to his country it seemed to him as if all Europe was asleep. "Isn't that the way it struck you, Mr. Faulkner?" he asked.

Not to be outdone in courtesy the American replied that for his own part he had been agreeably surprised by the incontestable evidences of prosperity, cheerfulness and industry he had seen in France. He went on to praise French railroads, French agriculture and the perfection of French manufactures. In his opinion all France wanted now was greater freedom of trade, thus early launching forth upon the need for a new Franco-American commercial treaty. The Emperor asked his guest about tariffs in the United States, which Faulkner admitted were very high, but were being reduced.

After some further conversation, in which his Majesty incidentally ridiculed the idea which had appeared in the British Press that he contemplated an invasion of England, Faulkner suddenly, to the astonishment of the courtiers, rose.

"I terminated the audience myself," he explained afterwards, "supposing that I had consumed as much of the time of his Majesty as was proper."

Faulkner soon began to feel deep apprehension concerning the situation at home. In his opinion, as a Southerner, the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency only darkened the prospect. As he scanned the comments in the French newspapers on the happenings in America, amongst much that is untrue and perverse, he is impelled to report:

"It is but just to these journals that they all appear to evince a sincere wish to see the Federal Union maintained in its integrity."

One journal, however, pretended to give certain instructions

from the " Southern Confederacy " to its diplomatic representative at the Imperial Court. Faulkner scouts the idea : " This preposterous hoax, for such I take it to be, is regarded here as genuine." For his part, he refuses to believe the South has, so far, appealed to France. When enquirers at the Legation asked, " Why do you not ask the Emperor himself ? " the Minister invariably replied, " Because it is too absurd, an enquiry would be supremely idle and expose me to merited criticism."

" The cloud [wrote Faulkner to Secretary Cass, December 20] which now hangs over our beloved country fills every patriot heart with sadness. It is here the all-absorbing topic of conversation with all classes and conditions. Every mail, every telegraphic despatch is sought after by our countrymen with the most poignant interest. The influence of the events there in progress is felt in every department of life. Even the liberal European dwells upon the prospect with sorrow and mingles his lamentations with our own. May God, in His infinite mercy, point to some escape from the perils that surround us ! "

This certainly does not sound like the language of a " traitor."

On New Year's Day Faulkner reports a talk with the Emperor, in which he showed himself full of optimism in reply to Napoleon's anxious enquiries. He pointed out that no State had yet actually seceded. But later he is informed that a South Carolinian deputation was in Paris and had been received by the Ministry. But Faulkner does not believe this report either, although he is much concerned over the sudden defection of Calhoun, his Secretary of Legation. A week later news comes that Secretary Cass has resigned his post and is succeeded by the Hon. Jeremiah Black, which saddens him.

At last, on January 14, the Minister can no longer doubt that his own State of Virginia will secede from the Union, and he writes the new Secretary :

" The anticipated and probable occurrence of an act which must materially alter my relations to the Government which I have now the honour to represent at this Court renders it proper that I should at the earliest moment make a frank

communication to you of my views. By birth and residence a citizen of that Commonwealth, bound to her fortunes by every tie of interest, duty and affection, recognizing the right in the exercise of her sovereign power as a State to withdraw her allegiance from the Federal Government and to command my services in any struggle in which she may be involved, it is obvious that I could not retain my present position of trust and honour after my State shall have assumed towards the Federal Government the relation of a foreign and independent Power.

" I shall, therefore, feel authorized and constrained, upon the occurrence of such an event, to retire from my present diplomatic post, so arranging that no Federal interest here confided to my safe-keeping shall suffer detriment by this act.

" But should the State of Virginia *not* separate, still it is my sincere and unaffected wish to retire. My position here has lost much of its original attraction, and indeed has often exposed me to very painful embarrassment. To a diplomatic representative abroad, nothing can be more grateful than the national weight and consideration which is accorded to his country. It has with me been an ample equivalent for the inferior diplomatic rank and an inadequate salary. I enjoyed this proud feeling during the earlier period of my residence here ; but I am now made to feel too keenly, in all the circles in which I move, the extent to which the national prestige of that once great and growing Republic has been impaired by those events which have destroyed the unity of our people and paralysed the arm of our National Power.

" Again a citizen and resident of the South, with my fortunes inseparably connected with the destiny of that section of the Continent, it is not to be supposed that I can be an indifferent spectator of a Revolution, in which I have naturally so deep an interest." [1]

Faulkner, therefore, demanded his recall. When, a night or two later, he saw the Emperor again, his Majesty was cordial and solicitous of good news. All the Southerners in Paris came flocking to the Legation.

" Last night I was at the Tuileries for the purpose of presenting a large number of my fellow-citizens, who had previously, through me, solicited that honour of their Imperial Majesties."

[1] Legation Letter-book.

It could not fail to be noticed that at the court ball the only Americans present were Southerners, while the Emperor was "unusually silent and reserved; in parting from the Empress she addressed to me some very handsome remarks upon the beauty and taste of the American ladies whom I had just presented, which, being well-merited, were properly received and responded to by me."

Confederate spies and plotters in Paris soon began to be active. The Legation despatch bag, in charge of the Consul at Havre, disappeared mysteriously *en route*, which involved a notification to the Prefect of Police. It was never found.

While waiting for his letter of recall, the Minister reports that American affairs continue to occupy universal attention. It incites him to melancholy reflections.

"A revolution was as little anticipated in the United States as an earthquake in Paris. That large communities should be casting off the protection of a Government to which thousands on this continent were looking for the realization of all their dreams of happiness on earth; that a system should be proclaimed a failure which had produced such extraordinary developments of national prosperity and power; that a flag should be trampled in the dust which has never been sainted by oppression, were problems well calculated to rouse the inquisitive and to puzzle the uninformed."

Faulkner was convinced that the Paris press did not understand the American system and so jumped to unwarrantable conclusions.

When Black wrote from Washington that, if the Secessionists in Paris were received by the Emperor, it would be regarded as an encouragement to the South and so disturb Franco-American relations—

"You have not [replied Faulkner] informed me what line of policy it is the purpose of the Federal Government to adopt towards the seceding States—a fact most material in determining my own action, as well as the views to be addressed to a foreign Power."

After indulging in a lengthy disquisition, the Minister adds:

"Whenever the parties place the issue fairly upon the arbitrament of the sword, then the result of arms must naturally determine the action of foreign Powers. . . . It

would seem to me, therefore, that no principle of international law nor any considerations of courtesy or commercial benefit could justify a foreign Power in adding to the embarrassments of our present domestic position by recognizing at this time the independence of the Confederated States."

He thought France would be the last power to give a hasty encouragement to the dismemberment of "our Union," which the Emperor regarded as a calamity. If any Confederate commissioners should arrive "they would find Napoleon not favourable to the objects of thier mission."

On March 20 Minister Faulkner was still at his post, receiving the notification of Lincoln's inauguration from Mr. Seward, the new Secretary of State, to whom he writes earnestly.

"It is not [he assures him] in watching over the relations between the United States and foreign Powers that a statesman will, in a time like this, look for the full measure of his fame. The theatre of patriotic service is nearer home. It is rescuing a distracted country from the perils which now surround it. And he who will exert his great abilities in reconstructing the Government which is rapidly sinking under the weight of internal discontent, who will re-establish security, who will restore nearly 30 million freemen to the fraternal sympathies which once animated their hearts, will have performed an act more worthy the gratitude of posterity than all the results which an age of the most brilliant and successful diplomacy can achieve."

He offered his opinion that the President's inaugural message was ably written, but adds that he could "see nothing in that state paper calculated to tranquillize the South or enlighten foreign Governments as to whether his policy is to be Peace or War."

"Surely, those who control the government of the United States and hold in their hands the issues of Peace and War must by this time have determined upon a course of action equal to the extraordinary crisis which has arisen in this country.

"If I may be allowed, at this distance from the scene of action, and with but imperfect information, to express an opinion, it seems to me there are but three—I should rather say but two—lines of policy open to the Government, for I cannot suppose that any administration could be so mad and

reckless as to attempt the exercise of force against the seceding States.

" These two are :

" 1. To concede to the Southern States such guarantees as will permanently assure their equality and safety as members of the Union.

" 2. To negotiate the terms of a friendly and peaceable separation and be yourselves the first to establish commercial and diplomatic relations with this new Confederation and to welcome it into the fraternity of nations."

On April 15 the American Minister saw Thouvenel and told him that he thought force would not be employed by President Lincoln, whereupon the French statesman agreed that to exert it would be most unwise. He added that no recognition of the Confederacy by the Emperor was probable at present.

It is impossible to read hearts: nevertheless, the testimony is abundant that Napoleon by no means regarded the trans-atlantic schism as an unalloyed evil and was even then meditating a possible advantage from it for his imperialistic schemes. He would have liked to acknowledge the Confederacy, but was dissuaded by British representations.

Faulkner's diplomatic career in Paris was now come to an end. His letter of recall was received on April 29. After a brief visit to London, to confer with Minister Dallas and to dine with the Lord Mayor, Faulkner took his farewell of the Emperor in May and sailed for home.

On reaching American shores the late Minister to France was promptly, but most unjustly, arrested on a charge of treason and confined in Fort Warren. How little such a charge could be sustained we have seen in his correspondence.

William Lewis Dayton, whose appointment as Faulkner's successor was submitted by President Lincoln to the Senate, hailed from New Jersey, and was the actual Attorney-General of that State. Five years before he had been the Republican candidate for the Vice-Presidency and thus had a considerable claim on the favour of the new administration.

He arrived in Paris a week before Faulkner's departure, and lost no time in informing Seward of his own views upon the situation.

"Our Legations and Consulates [Dayton reported] had been filled largely, not to say exclusively, during the administration of President Buchanan, with men of more or less doubtful loyalty, and London and Paris were swarming with Confederate emissaries. The officials and unofficials were all equally active in propagating the impression that the insurgent States had been wronged and oppressed by the Washington Government; that the Confederates were fighting only for their common rights, and not for slavery; that disunion was inevitable and imminent, and that neither the Washington Government nor the people of the loyal States in the impending quarrel had any just claim to the sympathies or respect of any foreign Power." [1]

After his reception by Thouvenel, the Foreign Minister (May 16, 1861), Dayton was assured that—

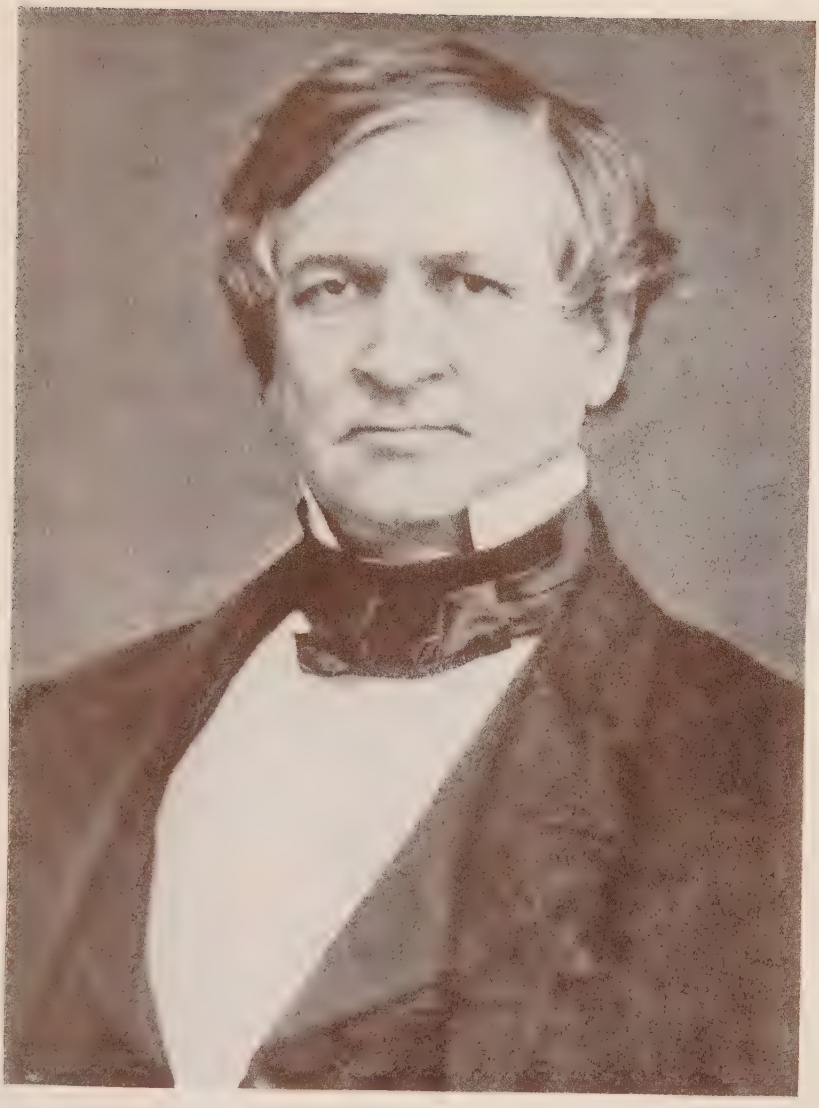
"So deeply concerned was the Emperor that he had felt disposed to offer his good offices, but had been deterred by the fear that his offer might not be well received. Should occasion arise he would always be ready and happy to be of use."

But when the American envoy saw the Emperor the following day, he found him "sphinx-like." His Majesty probably felt it unwise to commit himself to either party just then. His cousin, Prince Napoleon, a very shrewd and acute observer, who came to call upon Dayton, was much less reserved. "Plon-Plon's" recent visit to the United States had convinced him, he said, that the North would win. Unhappily, the Prince's opinions were not always acceptable at Court.

At an early stage Dayton felt that the growing hostility of a section of the Paris press ought somehow to be counteracted. It appeared to him to be based on ignorance and from the practice of obtaining American news through English channels. He had a pregnant suggestion to make, and wrote (May 27):

"There are some here who do not sympathize with us, but have made themselves very active in getting up a feeling on behalf of the Southern Secessionists. If a little money were judiciously expended here it would go far to put public sentiment right in certain quarters. We cannot expect the

[1] It was probably this letter which led the Federal Government to order the arrest of Dayton's predecessor. But from such sweeping charges of disloyalty Faulkner seems to have been exculpated.



W. L. DAYTON

press to submit as much matter and take as much interest in American affairs as we could desire without some compensation for the extra service.

"If a gentleman accustomed to the use of the pen, and especially if he had some acquaintance with the leading men connected with the European press, could be sent over here in the possession, nominally, of a *good* Consulate (the duties of which could be performed by clerks) while his attention could be really directed to the press, it might be of great use in giving a right direction to public sentiment. It is a duty which a public Minister could not, *with propriety*, perform, if he would."

In consequence of this letter, Seward at once communicated with John Bigelow, who had lately retired from the editorship of the New York *Evening Post*, and who now agreed to accept the nominal Consulate at Paris. Bigelow's arrival produced a curious situation. Bigelow was a younger, more energetic and abler man. He had previously established epistolary connections with many of the most prominent statesmen, publicists and journalists of the day. The Consulate at Paris became a kind of second and occasionally a more important Legation. Bigelow corresponded directly, confidentially and at length with the Secretary of State and also with other American Ministers in Europe.

It is true the times were exceptional, and it needed a great effort to combat the activities of Slidell, Bullock and the Confederate envoys and agents when they entered upon the scene ; but still, it could hardly fail to throw the accredited Minister into the background, and the impression derived from the Consul's monumental memoirs [1] is that he, and not Dayton, was America's principal representative at Paris. Sometimes he chafed when the Minister withheld his approval from various schemes and suggestions (as when he wished to employ the Legation special fund in establishing an American news service) and once brusquely sent in his resignation to Seward, who refused it.

It speaks much for the mutual tact of the two men that they should have got on as well as they did ; but they were both fighting a common danger, a recognition by France of the Southern Confederacy. As the younger man wrote of

[1] John Bigelow : *Retrospects of an Active Life.* (3 vols.)

Dayton after his death, he was "always a conciliator and harmonizer." Between them they made Slidell's task a very difficult one, as may be judged by a letter the Confederate commissioner wrote to his chief, Secretary Benjamin (August 24, 1862):

"I am getting to be heartily tired of Paris. My position is exceptional, and of course a false one. If I were here as a private individual I would have many resources of society from which I am now cut off. Official and diplomatic circles are closed to me, and I do not choose to compromise the dignity of my Government by having recourse to the usual means of obtaining the entrée of private houses."

The Confederate agent had, however, shrewd and energetic lieutenants in J. B. Eustis and Henry Vignaud,[1] and neglected no chance of obtaining French moral, financial and material help. Slidell had had an interview with Napoleon III at Vichy in July 1862, but the Emperor was very guarded in his language, although it was widely rumoured that he had made up his mind to intervene if Southern victories continued. Already the semi-official *La Patrie* had come out favouring the South in an editorial, and when this was republished in the *Moniteur* Dayton complained to the French Foreign Minister, Thouvenel, who declared the views were not those of the Emperor or his Ministers. At the same time Thouvenel took exception to his confidential remarks to the Minister being published in the United States and warned Dayton that in future he would be obliged to exercise more reserve. Dayton himself was offended by the practice, and wrote to Seward:

"On this subject of printing despatches you will pardon me for saying that when you permitted to be printed your confidential despatch to me, which despatch certainly does not put my conduct as a diplomatist in the best light, you should, in justice to me, have printed my reply."

Neither Seward nor the President could understand the Emperor's shilly-shally policy, and the former wrote to Dayton (July 21, 1863):

[1] Eustis afterwards became the first American Ambassador to France, while Vignaud served for many years as First Secretary of the American Legation in Paris.

"I do marvel, and I can't help marvelling, that France does not see how wise it would be to give us her sympathy instead of her despair."

Yet matters went on thus for a long time, public opinion varying with the fortunes of war and the Emperor's policy now being influenced by his new Mexican adventure.

Concurrently, there was the persistent illicit purchase of ships and armaments, undertaken by the redoubtable Captain Bullock.

There was the case of one Arman, a ship-builder at Bordeaux, with whom Bullock had contracted for the construction of ships for the Confederacy. He was also said to be " solid " with the Emperor, who was anxious to encourage ship-building in France, as well as to discountenance republicanism in America. Arman was also a member of the Corps Législatif.

On September 10, 1863, Bigelow informed Dayton that he had been shown by a mysterious visitor proofs that there were building for the Confederate service in ports of France four ships at 7,200,000 francs, two at 2,000,000 francs, a gunboat and much artillery and turrets for gunboats. For the documentary proofs, Bigelow's informant wanted a *douceur* of 15,000 francs. The Consul enquired whether he would be authorized to close with him ?

Dayton wrote instantly :

" I agree as to the importance of the papers ; pay him yourself. I cannot doubt that our Government will indemnify you."

Such was the foundation of the famous Arman suit for indemnity later brought by the Government of the United States.

Perhaps Napoleon secretly hoped for a different result from the American elections of November 1864. On the 25th of that month Dayton wrote to Seward :

" I have been much annoyed by the unfriendly spirit of the Government of France since the election. The *Patrie* in the opinion of yesterday throws out the suggestion that inasmuch as Mr. Lincoln will not receive the vote of a majority of the electors of all the States, it will not be possible to recognize him as the President of the United States.

"A conjoint effort of the English and I am sorry to say the French Press is being made to ward off the influence and effect of the late election. If there is anything in the English papers to belittle its consequence and encourage the South to hold out in the hope of recognition it is sure to be translated and copied into the French journals. The result of the election does not seem to have brought about that spirit of fairness which I had anticipated."

The foregoing proved to be Dayton's last despatch. A few days later (December 1) it was announced that he had died suddenly while on a visit to the Louvre hotel in Paris.

"Mr. Dayton [reported the Consul] had made a very hearty dinner the day previous, and among other things had eaten very freely of pumpkin-pie. Mr. Dayton was a man of strong appetites and fond of the pleasures of the table. His stomach had begun to fail, but he had not learned to diminish its tasks . . . the not uncommon mistake of men who have from their youth up enjoyed a good constitution and a vigorous health."

Bigelow afterwards recalled that he had given a dinner party shortly before at which the late Minister was present. After they were seated it was observed that there were thirteen at table, and a popular superstition was once again confirmed.

Dayton was buried with funeral honours, M. Laboulaye pronouncing his eulogy in the presence of a distinguished congregation, including the Foreign Minister, Drouyn de Lhuys, Prince Metternich and other members of the Diplomatic Corps.

For a time after Dayton's death it was not known who would succeed him, but the finger of probability pointed too definitely at the Consul in Paris to be ignored by the well-informed.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Faulkner's imprisonment was not of long duration, and on his release he made his way south, where he accepted employment on the staff of General Stonewall Jackson. Ten years after the war had ended, Faulkner was again elected to Congress, serving for two years. He died in 1884 in his seventy-eighth year.

CHAPTER XVI

BIGELOW AND DIX (1865–69)

"WHILE sitting alone in my office at the Consulate in the Chaussée d'Antin the morning of the 3rd of January, 1865, Mr. E. Buffum, the Paris correspondent of the *New York Herald*, entered with his face wreathed in smiles and offered me his congratulations. I asked him for what. 'Why,' said he, 'haven't you heard the news? You have been appointed Chargé d'affaires in place of Mr. Dayton. . . .'

"I had not before dreamed that Mr. Seward, with whom I had never held intimate personal relations, estimated my abilities, my services or my friendship sufficiently to think of translating me from a consulate to one of the highest and certainly at the moment one of the most responsible positions under our Government. I was scarcely less surprised by the intelligence that Buffum brought than I had been a few days before by the announcement of Mr. Dayton's death; for I took it for granted that such an office would go to some person of larger experience in political and administrative affairs."

This was certainly an excess of modesty in John Bigelow. It is difficult to see how any other or better appointment could have been made, or, indeed, why he should have had to wait three months longer before being appointed Minister Plenipotentiary.[1] For Bigelow was an exceptional man, and possessed in a peculiar degree the confidence both of the Secretary of State and the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs. During the four years he had been Consul in Paris his duties had been far more diplomatic than consular, to such an extent as occasionally to overshadow his official chief. Under the circumstances, therefore, Bigelow might have felt somewhat less surprise and gratitude.

[1] President Lincoln had, however, in the meantime nominated James Gordon Bennett as Dayton's successor. Bennett declined the post.

"I never dared," he wrote Seward—and the letter indicates that tendency to verbosity which characterizes Bigelow's despatches and the subsequent ponderous volumes of his diplomatic memoirs—"I never dared to hope that my consular career was to be so honourably crowned. I should have been quite content to carry out of the service what little reputation I brought into it.

"After the letter you have written me, the full mission, though it might confer additional capacity for usefulness, can confer upon me no additional honour. To be thought worthy of it by the most competent person in the world to judge me, is all there is about the place which appeals to my ambition. It is with public dignities as with trees, the higher they are the longer are their shadows. In leaving the shelter of my consular obscurity for such a position as this I must become an object of envy to many who would never have felt towards me as Consul an unkind thought. I shall find myself surrounded by unfamiliar temptations and perils, and, like the gambler who tempts fortune once too often, I may lose as a diplomatist the enviable reputation you have now given me reason to suppose I have won as Consul. Should such be the result, my chief regret would be that you, as primarily responsible for calling me into the diplomatic service, would be also responsible largely to the public for the consequences."

He need have had no fears. It is true the times were still troubled and threats to Franco-American relations were arriving from another quarter; but the major difficulties due to the Civil War and the efforts of the Confederacy in Europe were now fast drawing to a close. In reviewing his mission, both as Consul and Minister, Bigelow long afterwards wrote:

"From the beginning until near the close of my official residence at the French Court, I had to deal with a sovereign whose plans were liable at any moment to involve us in a most inopportune war with our first, and indeed our only, national ally. The blockade of the insurgents' ports, which cut off from western Europe to a serious extent its customary supply of cotton, rice and tobacco, bore heavily upon some of the most important manufacturing industries of England, France, Germany and Belgium, besides seriously affecting their revenues. The recognition of the insurgents as belligerents;

the building and equipping of armed vessels to prey upon our commerce; the occupation of Mexico by France, with the view of imposing an Austrian prince upon the throne from which the Emperor Yturbide had been expelled only forty-two years before; the undisguised sympathy of the seaboard States of Europe with the insurgent Government, together with an almost universal impression, which emissaries from the insurgent States had for three or four years been insidiously propagating, that two republics at least would be found at the close of the war occupying the territory which had heretofore been occupied by the United States alone,—all these circumstances conspired to make the life of a representative of the Union Government in Europe one of unceasing distrust, contention and anxiety. During all that period I was not permitted once to leave Paris for any distance which I could not retrace in five or six hours. In the voluminous correspondence between the Government at Washington and its foreign representatives, to which this state of things gave rise, is now to be found the only history in existence of a series of perils far more threatening to the Union than the embattled armies with which it was engaged. But for the encouragement received by the disunion conspirators from England and France previous to the election of President Lincoln, it is not probable that the slave States would have ventured any further in defiance of the Federal Government in 1861 than they had done in 1832, during the Presidency of Andrew Jackson; and if they had ventured to take up arms against the Government without the assured encouragements which they actually received from those two nations, and without the recognition as an independent power which they confidently expected, Mr. Seward's prophecy, on his way to take his seat in Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet, of a sixty days' war would not have seemed so chimerical as it afterwards appeared." [1]

On the way home from the Consulate after the receipt of his letter of credence Bigelow stopped, he tells us, to take charge of the Legation which was, surprisingly, "kept in a part of Mrs. Dayton's apartments on the rue Circulaire, opposite the Arc de Triomphe. I arranged," says Bigelow, "to leave it there for the remainder of her lease, gave directions for the taking of the inventory, and then," seating himself

[1] *Retrospects of an Active Life.*

at a desk and helping himself to a sheet of stamped note-paper, the new acting Minister to France addressed a letter to M. Drouyn de Lhuys requesting the customary official reception.[1]

On January 13 Bigelow describes his first visit to the Foreign Minister.

"I was received by a man of about sixty years of age, as it seemed to me, rather full-set but well-proportioned, with a gracious expression of countenance and a deliberate and dignified carriage. His features were generally round, but well marked, the top of his head a little bald, and his lower jaw indicating a man of strong propensities and will. He received me, I thought, a little mechanically, as if this was a duty which had lost its novelty to him, but he read my letter of credence through very carefully. He probably thought, too, that his manner should testify to the fact that only the day before I was but a Consul. He then spoke of Mr. Dayton very kindly, made some inquiries in regard to his death, spoke graciously of having seen me at his funeral and of having read some of my correspondence with his department, submitted by Mr. Dayton. Speaking of the relations with our respective countries, he remarked that they were delicate, very delicate, etc., with an emphasis which was evidently intended to be impressive. I alluded as modestly as I could to my inexperience as a diplomatist, to which he replied that the great art of diplomacy, if there was any, consisted in comprehending as far as possible the strength and merits of both sides of the case about which you are treating. He added that governments must treat and be treated with con-

[1] As to the Consulate, he would have turned it over to Vice-Consul Brooks, but the latter had just accompanied the late Minister's remains to America. "In the office," he writes, "was a bright young man by the name of Edward Tuck, a son of the Hon. Amos Tuck of New Hampshire. I had helped to examine him as consular pupil, and he had been assigned to duty at my consulate. I appointed him Vice-Consul and Acting Consul, and thus relieved myself in a measure from a class of duties which I could no longer properly discharge."

"Bigelow adds of this well-known banker and philanthropist:

"Mr. Tuck held the appointment until the arrival of Mr. Nicolay, who had been one of the secretaries of President Lincoln. He was then invited to enter the banking house of John Munroe & Co. His subsequent career has been a perpetual vindication of my choice. I am most happy to have contributed in some slight degree to promote the fortunes of one who, aside from his own admirable qualities and character, was the son of a firm and efficient friend of Free Soil in the dark days of 1848–61."—*Retrospects.*

fidence and not with distrust, for it was with them as with merchants—a certain amount of credit was indispensable. After I came to know M. Drouyn de Lhuys better I thought many times of this conversation here briefly sketched. I left him with a feeling that he was uncertain whether he had a friend or a foe to deal with in me. It was well known by him that I was in pretty active communication with all the journals of France which sustained the Union cause in America, and that I had done a great deal through the press in arraying the popular sympathy of France against a slavery-perpetuating Confederacy at home and the propagation of Imperialism in Mexico."

Bigelow had not been many days in office when he received a letter from the editor of *Le Temps* introducing a young French officer, recently a pupil of the Polytechnic School, who was fired by the notion of serving in the American Federal Army. His name was Boulanger, and he wished some introductions to the authorities at Washington or some of the Northern generals.

" What [wrote Bigelow] would have been the effect upon the world's history had I encouraged, as I did not, the aspirations of the captain—I believe he was then only a captain—had he been invited to draw his sword for the Union, is one of those secrets of Providence which it would be as difficult to probe as the effect upon the world's history had Milton or Napoleon carried out the purpose both are said to have entertained at one time, of seeking an asylum on this side of the Atlantic."

The Minister subsequently saw something of the notorious General Boulanger, Minister of War, and the conviction was forced upon him that he " did not owe to his virtues the brief prominence he subsequently obtained in France."

In making his offiical calls upon the Diplomatic Corps, Bigelow had a brief and somewhat embarrassing interview with Señor Mon, the Spanish Ambassador.

" Señor Mon was a very old man, approaching rapidly the end of a very prolonged diplomatic career and of his life. After making my rank known to him—for I had never met him—and for the lack of something better to say, by way of making myself agreeable to him I referred to the obligations

which Americans more especially owed to his country for having discovered their country and colonized it.

"'Ugh!' he exclaimed, and in very bad French said: 'Yes, and I am very sorry she ever did discover America, for it was the greatest calamity to my country that it ever experienced.'"

During his visit to the Duc de Morny, the latter's resemblance to the Emperor, though a much handsomer man, struck Bigelow forcibly.

"He spoke of our affairs looking promising, and appealed to my companion, M. Loubat, as a witness that he had always been our friend—though M. Loubat afterwards repeated to me a conversation which they had had together after the Mexican entanglement, when the Duke's friendship was not so pronounced. There was no sense in the Rebellion, said the duke. The South had no good cause, at all events, for France to meddle with it. Nor had he personally any sympathy with those imbeciles who were always trying to get France to link her fate with Poles and Danes and Turks and all other nationalities in trouble. There was talk in our case, he said, about the Latin race to whose progress the United States might prove a check, but that he thought of trifling consequence.

"'Yes,' I said, 'for there are more of the Latin race in New York City than in all the Southern States, and more Catholics in the State of New York than in the whole Confederacy.'

"'Oh, I don't care for the Catholics; their religion is the least of my concern. I am *un homme politique*, but not *un homme religieux*.'

"This was said with an air of such utter contempt for the Church as to satisfy me that nothing but fear secured to the priesthood a day's toleration in France; for his views on that question were the Emperor's, I had no doubt.

"It was not until after the downfall of the Empire, of which De Morny was one of the most important pillars, that I learned that he was, next to the Empress, the chief patron of the Imperial scheme in Mexico, and a partner in the Jecker claim, the satisfaction of which was made its principal pretext."

Bigelow was soon to be made aware that there was a difference between a Chargé d'affaires and a Minister, and also

that one of the functions and privileges of the representative of his country had been subjected to considerable abuse. A ball was given at the Tuileries, the first of the season, and the names of a dozen or more Americans who desired invitations had been sent in by the Legation Secretary, Pennington. On that evening the ladies and gentlemen sat at home *en grande toilette* waiting for cards of invitation which never came. Pennington thought it was owing to the lateness of his application, but Bigelow was suspicious of another cause.

"This unpleasant incident introduced me rather awkwardly to one of the least agreeable and least satisfactory duties which were in those days imposed upon an American Minister in Paris. The American colony in the French metropolis has usually been much larger than in any other European capital. It consisted largely of people in quest of pleasure or of social preferment. Of these but a small proportion felt much of the delicacy in applying for an invitation to Court which they would feel in applying for an invitation to an entertainment given in their own country by persons they had never visited; and they were apt to overlook the reciprocal obligations and privileges of host and guest, when they asked for or accepted such invitations. They regarded a court festival, not as an act of personal hospitality, but rather as a public spectacle to which it was one of the imperative duties of their Minister to procure them access. Whether their acquaintance or presence would confer any pleasure upon their hosts, or prove any indemnification whatever for the not inconsiderable expense and trouble which their presence necessarily occasioned, were questions which were not apt to disturb them."

Bigelow thought it advisable to call on the Foreign Minister and have a talk with him; but the result was not quite satisfactory, as when the American representative showed him a list of his compatriots desirous of attending the next ball Drouyn de Lhuys thought it highly irregular for a Chargé d'affaires who had not yet been presented to their Majesties to present anyone.

No wonder Bigelow confesses that he

"felt, as I rode home, like sending in no list, and recommending my country-people who wanted to go to Court to wait until they were sent for. Already I began to realize

how much of himself a man surrenders who accepts a diplomatic position. I felt humiliated at finding myself under the necessity of submitting to a lesson in good breeding through an understrapper in the Foreign Office, which I could neither reject nor resent, for I knew full well that the provocation for the course they were taking was ample, and the method as considerate toward me as I had any reason to expect. The Emperor had a right to dispense his cakes and ale as he pleased, and, if it were otherwise, I could ill afford to make my début in the Diplomatic Corps as the complainant on such an issue."

After a further interview with one of the court chamberlains, chiefly relating to certain undesirable Americans who had appeared at Court, one of them the wife of a New York horse-dealer, Bigelow sent in his list and duly received the corresponding number of tickets for the next ball.

The American Chargé was soon deep in more serious affairs. On the day before the death of the Duc de Morny he reported to Secretary Seward :

" I heard last evening that the Emperor had said that the honour of France was engaged in the support of Maximilian [in Mexico] and that orders had been given to send General Bazaine eight regiments of picked troops from Algiers immediately. . . . The news will have a prodigious effect upon the Chambers if it proves to be true."

" The work," declared *Le Constitutionnel*, " which France has undertaken in Mexico, and which she will not leave unfinished, moves towards a happy and rapid accomplishment."

On March 17, 1865, Seward wrote to Bigelow :

" The Emperor's persistence implies that he yet believes to be certain, what we have constantly told him that the people of the United States, reasoning upon preconceived sentiments and national principles, cannot even apprehend to be possible—namely, that a new European monarchical system can and ought to be permanently established on the American continent and in territory bordering on this Republic."

The war in America was now drawing to a close, and in his next interview with the French Foreign Minister Bigelow suggested that the time had come when it would be politic

[*Wide World Photos.*

JOHN BIGELOW.

for France to withdraw the declaration conceding belligerent rights to the Confederacy. In reply M. Lhuys said that he "had observed with regret an anti-French spirit growing up in America which, if indulged in, might have evil results."

"Throughout the war [he continued] we have endeavoured to treat the United States as a whole, and to avoid any act which looked towards a recognition of any part rather than the whole of the country. We have tried to be prepared for whatever fate was in store for the country, as the result of this war, disposed to accept what Heaven should send as, on the whole, best for the country, but without any disposition to anticipate or control that result in any way whatever. That has been and will continue to be the position of France towards the United States. If you come to-morrow and inform me that peace has been concluded, I shall be happy to felicitate you. It would seem from your papers that your arms have prospered, but until you have crushed your adversaries we cannot deny them the rights of belligerents.

"In the progress of his Excellency's remarks [commented Bigelow] I found occasion to state that circumstances have certainly occurred to excuse a portion of the irritation betrayed by my country-people towards France, and I referred particularly to the two years of anxious suspense in which we were kept in regard to the ultimate destination of the vessels contracted for by Arman for the Confederates. 'If,' said I, 'after the distinct pledge of your Excellency to Mr. Dayton, one of these vessels is permitted to leave France, and passes straight into the hands of the Confederates——"

In such an event, declared Bigelow solemnly, his Government would certainly hold the French Government responsible.

Early in April Bigelow received his commission and instructions as full Minister. Gratitude once more welled up in his heart, and again he wrote off to Seward :

"You have placed me and my family for generations to come under obligations which they can never hope to repay, for you have ennobled us in the only sense in which one man can ennoble another. That I may realize your expectation of my usefulness here is my daily prayer."

All was rejoicing in the Bigelow family. It was otherwise with the unhappy First Secretary, Pennington, who had

followed up his crime of not receiving his new chief with enthusiasm by further offences. The Minister had asked for Pennington's dismissal, and got it. At the same time one feels that Bigelow's recital of the Secretary's incompetence is overcharged.

"I handed your letter of recall without delay to Mr. Pennington, as I had no excuse for continuing him here. With many amiable qualities, P. could hardly have drifted into a place for which he is less fitted in every respect than the one he has occupied for the last four years, and from which he very reluctantly retires.

"His ignorance is profound; he has neither the desire nor the capacity to learn anything; his habits are not very good; he is careless and untidy in his person and boorish in his manners; he writes an illegible hand and is incapable of inditing the simplest sort of a note in a satisfactory way. I had no excuse for keeping for a single day such a person under the pay of the Government, when the responsibility rested with me."

On April 23 Minister Bigelow presented his credentials from Abraham Lincoln to his "Great and Good Friend," the Emperor Napoleon III.[1] There being no Atlantic telegraph in operation, there was none to apprise monarch or minister that nine days before President Lincoln had passed away—struck down by the bullet of an assassin.

The Emperor on this occasion told Bigelow that he was

"happy to receive the assurance which I gave him of the friendly wishes of the President. He felt the kindest feeling towards the United States and intimated that the two countries had a common interest in maintaining good relations with each other: He said he hoped that the peace which,

[1] "I have been ill and shut up for a week, so as to see nobody, except such as have called, but I am going out this afternoon, when I shall know a little more precisely the cue this Government will take. Illness prevented my presenting my credentials on Sunday last. The news of the evacuation of Richmond reached here on Saturday. I am told that I have gained the reputation of a profound diplomat for my cunning in not waiting upon the Emperor till I had received dispatches written by the light of the new situation. That is what is called here smart. The Duc de Cambacérès was heard to remark at a dinner-table that of course I would not see the Government till I had read my dispatches, and other diplomats assented to the entire propriety of my course, while I, poor devil, was lying racked by fever on my bed."—Bigelow: *Retrospects.*

according to the news just received (the report of Lee's surrender had only just reached Paris), seemed now very near, would not prejudice those relations, nor did he fear while the United States Government was inspired by the sentiments which I had expressed and which I would represent. He begged me to say this to my Government, and concluded by again speaking of the gratification he had in welcoming me at the Palace by my new title."

We get an interesting sidelight on the character and views of the Empress Eugénie at this time.

After a brief desultory conversation about the news of Lee's surrender, the American envoy retired, and was almost immediately conducted to the Empress, to whom he had already been promised a presentation after his reception by the Emperor.

" Her Majesty expressed gratification that my residence in Paris was to be continued. She asked about the prospects of a peace in America and showed by the form of her inquiry that she had not yet received the news of Lee's surrender, which I had the satisfaction of communicating to her. She immediately asked what would be the condition of the slaves—if they would be free. I replied that, unless some stipulations were made which had not transpired, slavery was ended in the United States. Her Majesty wished to know if we did not intend to indemnify the proprietors for the loss of their slaves. I replied that slavery was a local institution in the United States and that each State would act as it saw fit in reference to the indemnity of the former proprietors. ' Ah, indeed, is that so ? I did not know that,' was her reply. She asked what we would now do with all our army. I replied that we should put them to work. At this her Majesty laughed heartily and said, ' Yes, they will have need to go to work, but what to do ? ' I am not sure, but I think her Majesty suspected me of intending to give a double meaning to my reply, and I went on promptly to say that when our soldiers could get in civil employments, as they now could, about twice their pay in the army, they would not be reluctant to abandon the military career. ' But,' she added, ' how will it be with the officers ? ' I replied that in America military officers did not enjoy the prestige which belongs to the same class in the old countries of Europe. ' Here,' said I, ' it has been necessary to stimu-

late the military spirit by decorations and privileges of various kinds which invite talent and ambition into the Army, whereas with us there is nothing of the sort; the military man has no social or political prestige which necessarily attaches to this rank or profession.'

"Her Majesty wished to know if what she evidently meant to designate as the mob, without wishing to use the term, might not overrule the statesmen and engage the country in a war.

"I replied that we had no numerous class of the kind her Majesty referred to; that with us everybody read the papers and had a tolerable familiarity with current political events; that by the aid of the telegraph the best thought in Washington and the latest intelligence could be read simultaneously on the shores of the Pacific and on the shores of the Atlantic and on the Gulf of Mexico; that the pulse of the whole nation beat in accord with its heart, so that there was never a large class far behind the Government in a knowledge of and a just appreciation of the national interests. Her Majesty asked several other questions, but I do not know that they would throw any additional light upon the tenor of the interview. As I was about leaving, she said she hoped France and the United States would always be friends, and she was sure I would do all I could to make them friends. I replied that it would be my duty as well as my pleasure to do so."

Not until April 27, when the Minister had gone on an official visit to Brest, did a telegram reach him from a clerk at the Legation:

"Telegram received at Paris Bourse from London at two o'clock: 'President Lincoln assassinated. An attempt against Seward failed.'

"It was [he wrote in his journal] a clap of thunder from a clear sky! I was glad to be secure of several hours' journey in the cars, surrounded by strangers and left alone to my reflections."

Lincoln's death created a sensation in France and evoked a sorrow so deep and widespread as to surprise even the American Minister.

"An aide-de-camp of the Emperor called early yesterday morning at the Legation, officially to express the horror and sorrow which his Majesty experienced on learning the crime

which had just deprived the United States of its President. On the receipt of the first report, his Majesty had refused to credit it, but a second despatch later in the evening left no room to doubt its correctness. It was then too late to send to the Legation, but the aide-de-camp was instructed to come at an early hour the next morning to express the sentiments of his Majesty, and to request, on behalf of the Emperor, that I would transmit an expression of them to the Vice-President.

"It is my duty to add my conviction that his Majesty, in the communication which he has requested me to make, is but a faithful interpreter of the sentiments of his subjects, who have received the intelligence with an unanimous expression of horror for the crime and of sympathy for its victims."

In the Corps Législatif, on May 1, M. Rouher declared:

"The Emperor, the public bodies and France, from one end to the other, are unanimous in their sentiments of reprobation for a detestable crime, in their homage to a great political character, victim of the most criminal passions, and in their ardent wishes for the re-establishment of harmony and concord among the great and patriotic American nation."

Three weeks later the Foreign Minister announced that the French declaration of neutrality was revoked and vessels of the United States were no longer denied the hospitality of French ports. With the surrender of Lee and the capture of Jefferson Davis, the Civil War in America was over.

But another crisis was approaching to threaten Franco-American relations. Napoleon III was still pursuing his dangerous policy in Mexico, and Minister Bigelow reported the possibility of French troops crossing over the northern border. His despatch aroused Secretary Seward, then recovering from the wounds he had received at the hands of his would-be assassin, to a vigorous enunciation of American policy.

"If it be true, as you have conceived, that France is likely to adopt some measure of hostility towards the United States on the ground of real or expected political complications in Mexico, the United States must wait the shock according to their ability. It is already known to the Government of France that the United States are not prepared

to recognize a monarchical and European power in Mexico, which is yet engaged in war with a domestic republican Government and a portion of the Mexican people; but it must be acknowledged, on the other hand, that the United States have, from the first appearance of the shadow of that foreign domination in Mexico until its present stage of administration, expressed their views to France upon the subject in a perfectly direct, frank and friendly manner. The sentiments of the people of the United States in regard to affairs in Mexico, which have been so often expressed in the manner to which I have referred, are natural and inextinguishable. It would be a new event in history if one nation can give cause of offence to another nation by declining to become the ally of that nation in a war for the overthrow of a state friendly to the power so refusing to be an ally. We shall not believe, until we have convincing proof, that France is to invade the United States on such a pretext. During three years in Mexico, the United States have maintained a strict line of forbearance and neutrality. From time to time the French authorities have given notice to the United States of apprehended violations of neutrality by American citizens, and the Government of the United States have promptly interposed and prevented the intrusions menaced. Here the United States must stand. Beyond this they cannot go. They desire peace, and would cheerfully restore their traditional relations with France. It will remain for France to say whether for these relations shall be substituted an alienation whose consequences might involve an arrest of the march of civilization throughout the world." [1]

This was certainly ably expressed, and made an impression.

For the next eighteen months, or until French troops were withdrawn from the hapless Maximilian's "Empire," the burning question of Mexico continued almost to monopolize the diplomatic labours of Minister Bigelow. Sometimes the situation seemed very threatening indeed; sometimes it looked as if the most solemn promises of Napoleon and his Foreign Minister were about to be disregarded.

"If [wrote Seward, Sept. 29, 1866] you find any indication of inconstancy on the part of the Imperial Government, you will, in a discreet as well as respectful manner, cause it

[1] Seward to Bigelow, June 12, 1865.

to be understood that the United States are relying with entire confidence upon the evacuation of Mexico by the French forces according to the existing arrangement."

In all these labours the Minister had had the invaluable assistance of a secretary who was destined in time himself to leave his mark as an Ambassador and as a Secretary of State of the first rank. This was John Hay, who had been assistant secretary to President Lincoln, and who, with J. G. Nicolay, had arrived in Paris in July 1865, the latter as Consul in Bigelow's place. Hay's quick intelligence and bright humour made friends for him from the moment of his coming. He was a week too late, however, to assist his chief in his project of a Fourth of July celebration on an unusual scale of magnificence. Instead of an hotel dinner and "the opening of the flood-gates of our Fourth of July oratory in Paris for which times and circumstances were not yet quite propitious," Bigelow proposed to engage the Pré Catelan in the Bois de Boulogne at his own expense and give a *fête champêtre*.

"I intended to invite every American then in Europe that I knew or had heard of, his wife and all his children, including babes in arms, and there was no hotel in Paris large enough to entertain the number I expected to invite, nor could the children be received at the table if there had been room enough. I then sent out to every American, official or unofficial, and to each individual member of his family, if he had any, and including his domestics, a card of invitation."

The invitations included all the official representatives as well as Ministers, etc., of the United States in Europe, though most of them were detained at their posts by corresponding ceremonies at their own Legations. The total number of cards issued was: gentlemen, 227; ladies, 193; children, with their nurses, 108; total, 528, which gives us a fairly approximate idea of the American population in the French capital in 1865.

The *fête champêtre* duly took place and was a great success.

"With the exception of the French Ministers and the Diplomatic Body, the company present consisted solely of Americans, or foreigners connected with America by marriage. In all, between six and seven hundred persons were present, including about a hundred children, who formed a most interest-

ing feature in the day's proceedings. The visitors, in fact, formed the largest body of Americans that had ever been congregated on the continent of Europe at one time and place.

"An immense tent capable of holding a thousand persons was erected in face of the principal entrance to the grounds and was most tastefully dressed out with flags and drapery and laid with carpeting for dancing. At one end was spread out a spacious buffet capable of accommodating two hundred persons at once and well supplied with substantial refreshments by Chevet, while the guests found an abundance of ices, sherbets, light wines and other summer drinks in a pavilion in the grounds. The company began to assemble at two o'clock, and among the arrivals were the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mme Drouyn de Lhuys; the Minister for the Colonies and Marine and the Marquise de Chasseloup-Laubat; the Marquis de La Valette; Baron André, First Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Lord Cowley and Baron de Budberg, the English and Russian Ambassadors, besides the representatives of Italy, Turkey, Bavaria, Holland, Switzerland, Greece, Baden, Chili, Honduras and San Salvador, Paraguay, the Argentine Republic, San Marino, etc.

"At three o'clock, the guests being for the most part assembled, Mr. Bigelow welcomed them with the following carefully prepared speech:

"'My Friends: When the children of Israel stood besides the waters of idolatrous Babylon and thought of their distant country ravaged by enemies and wasted by war, they hung their harps upon the willows and wept. "How," they cried, "can we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land?"

"'For three long years the Americans in Europe, anguished by kindred calamities, have tried in vain to unite in celebrating their great national jubilee, for how could we sing the glories of our political birthright, surrounded by the great world of little faith, to whose darkened apprehensions the ark of our national covenant seemed struggling and labouring like some great Indiaman about to strand upon an inhospitable coast?

"'At last, thanks be to God, the storm has passed; the sky is clear; "grim-visaged War hath smoothed his wrinkled front"; the tramp of hostile arms is no longer heard on our soil; the great sin of our people has been expiated; our manhood has been vindicated; the American Union is safe; democratic-republican government is no longer an experi-

ment; "God's hand was not shortened that He could not save, nor His ear heavy that He could not hear." ' "

The speech-making over, the feasting began. Later in the day a portion of the company adjourned to the tent for dancing, while others spread over the grounds, where in separate buildings might be witnessed the performance of a wizard, or the exhibition of humming-birds, which latter entertainment appeared to delight immensely the juvenile portion of the visitors.

Bigelow's appropriation of the Bois de Boulogne as a play-ground for the American Eagle was long remembered by the Parisians.

Secretary Hay was in those days an irrepressible humorist, and when Bigelow went away on holiday the First Secretary's private letters to his chief were full of droll passages, including an abundance of puns. He tells the Minister:

"I occupied your pew on Sunday and borrowed money of Brooks to drop in the plate. (I will take my pay in silver mines, after the Deluge before mentioned.) Dr. Sunderland preached a sermon on Parasites. He said the greatest *Pair of Sights* now going were the Falls of Niagara and Mills Jackson.

"Misses Hales called to see you yesterday. The party rattled into the office like a Hale-storm."

At another time he wrote:

"I have nothing to tell you, but think it well enough to tell you that.

"I would, however, congratulate you on an escape you have had. A strong-minded American female called the other day to get your approval of a speech she wants to make. I told her to leave the MS.; she informed me that she carried it in her head and proposed to deliver it verbally to you, 'as the graces of oratory,' she kindly observed, 'sort of lit up a thing of this sort.' I agreed with her, I fear, a little too thoroughly, as she immediately proposed to 'say it' to me. 'It won't take me more than an hour, and I can say it without missing a word.' In the words of the lamented Kirke White:

"'Deep horror then my vitals froze!'

I tried to explain that I was only a miserable subordinate—too much honour—couldn't assume the high prerogative of

ambassadorial criticism—from which she gathered that I would rather not. She was surprised, and said, ' Have you *no* curiosity ? ' ' Not a particle,' I said. (Heaven forgive me, for I am worse than Gyges !)

" She thought me an infant phenomenon and stayed an hour talking of her soul and her mission, with both of whom she seemed on comfortable terms, at intervals of five minutes saying abstractedly, ' And you have no curiosity ? ' She went away to see Baron Haussmann, taking her soul and her mission with her. She sent Antoine, after she disappeared, to ask me if I had no curiosity.

" ' Peace hath her victories,
No less renowned than war.' "

" As Dr. Sunderland is a little free in his Litany, I will try, by the time you return, to have an addition of this sort made to it :

" From strong-minded females, from too much soul, from peripatetic apostles with good memories, good Lord, deliver us ! "

On October 6 Bigelow reported to Seward an interview he had just had with Drouyn de Lhuys with regard to Mexico.

" He extenuated the action of his Government by saying that it did not go to Mexico for conquest ; that it did not impose Maximilian, but that he was the choice of the national will as far as it was possible at the time for the national will to express itself ; that his being a foreign Prince ought not to be remembered long against him, as he would soon become identified with the fortunes of his adopted country, like many of the reigning sovereigns in and out of Europe, of foreign birth. I interrupted his Excellency to say that it was less because Maximilian was a foreigner that our people excepted to his presence there than because he was maintained there by foreign arms. His Excellency replied that foreign arms were now only needed there as a police, and that the French force in Mexico deserved rather to be termed a *gendarmerie* than an army ; that always after a war in a country it is more or less infested with disorderly people, and the office of the French soldier in Mexico now was merely to police the country. ' But,' he added, as if not wishing to stand too long on such thin ice, ' leaving all these details aside, your Government cannot wish us out of Mexico as much as we desire to

get out, and we shall neglect no effort to do so with the least possible delay.' He could not, he said, at that moment fix any precise time, but if, as his recent intelligence led him to believe, the relations on the border were becoming quiet and satisfactory, the final departure of the French troops could not be distant."

The American Minister was aroused a month later by a chauvinistic article in defence of the Mexican occupation from the pen of the celebrated Lamartine. This article contained a violent attack on the United States, its people and institutions, charging the modern Americans with possessing a civilization rather lower than their predecessors, the Aztecs.

"Their journals, innumerable because cheap, are but collections of advertisements of quacks recommended by the *Barnums* of the press; compilations of slanders and invectives daily thrown to the different parties to furnish them with odious names, or trivial accusations wherewith to discredit each other and gain subscribers. Their drawing-rooms are held at hotels; their gatherings of men, unsoftened by kindly feelings or female politeness, are but clubs in which eager traders avail themselves even in their time of rest to increase their fortune at the close of the day, proud of knowing nothing except that which pays, and conversing only on real or imaginary speculations in which to increase their capital a hundredfold. Their liberty, which is entirely personal, has always in it something hostile to some one else; the absence of kindly feeling gives them, in general, the tone and attitude of a person afraid of insult or seeking to prevent insult by dint of an overbearing attitude.

"They are themselves aware of the habitual disagreeableness of their manners. One of the few political orators they possess, the most eloquent and the most honest, whom national jealousy has always prevented, on account of his superiority, from rising to the Presidency, said to me one day: 'Our liberty consists in *doing everything that can be most disagreeable to our neighbour*.' The art of being disagreeable is their second nature. To please is a symptom of loving. They love no one; no one loves them. It is the expiation of selfishness. History furnishes no type of a nation like this people: pride, coldness, correctness of features, stiffness of gestures, chewing tobacco in the mouth, a spittoon at their feet, the legs stretched on the mantelpiece or crossed without regard

of the decorum which man ought to observe towards man, a short, monotonous imperious tone, a disdainful personality stamped upon every feature—such are these autocrats of gold.

" With a few shining exceptions, who suffer everywhere from the general pressure in an inferior atmosphere, exceptions which are all the more honourable as they are the more numerous individually, such is the American of the North, such is the air of his country ; the pride of what he lacks.

" Such is this people to whom Mr. Monroe, one of its flatterers, said, in order to gain its applause : ' The time has come when you must not permit Europe to interfere in the affairs of America, but when you must henceforth assert your preponderance in the affairs of Europe.' "

In forwarding Lamartine's scathing diatribe to the Secretary of State, Bigelow intimated that while " the feebleness of M. Lamartine's character has long since made his talents as a writer a calamity to himself and a source of mortification to his friends, it may be profitable for those who direct the Government of the United States to know what sort of opinions about us are still most cheerfully propagated by journals deriving their inspiration from official sources."

It was certainly clear that the French Government resented deeply the implications of the Monroe Doctrine.

" France," the Foreign Minister told Bigelow

" is not timid, nor much accustomed, when she has entered upon a policy, to flinch from its consequences, whatever they may be. He then said that he had felt at liberty to infer, from your correspondence which in times past I had read to him, that while the Government of the United States was not pleased with the establishment of an Imperial Government in Mexico, it did not propose to embarrass it by an armed opposition ; but from the despatch I had just read, he could not resist the conclusion that we were determined to destroy all they had been trying in the interest of all nations to do for Mexico. For this change of policy he was not prepared, and he asked why, if we meant war, you did not say so frankly, and then they would understand us and he would have nothing to do but to ' take the orders of the Emperor.' " [1]

Seward may not have " meant war," but he undoubtedly meant the world to believe that he did not shrink even

[1] Bigelow to Seward, November 30, 1865.

from that extremity. For the moment Napoleon had " called his bluff," but exactly a year later Mexico was still such a burning question that on hearing from Bigelow that the Emperor had decided to postpone evacuation to the following spring, Seward sprang a new one. He boldly and extravagantly resorted to the new Atlantic cable, sending a message which astonished Paris and established a record in diplomatic telegrams. Thirty years later Bigelow wrote of it :

" This dispatch was the first and the longest as well as the most momentous perhaps, that has yet ever crossed the Atlantic by telegraph, and of course, as it came in cipher, it was, I presume, the most expensive dispatch for its number of words that to this day has ever reached Europe from the State Department. It began to arrive on the morning of the 26th of November before I was out of bed, and the last instalment arrived at half-past four in the afternoon of the following day, its coming interrupted only during a few of the most pressing business hours of each day. The time consumed in its delivery was due to the fact that for every letter of the dispatch four or five figures were used. It cost the State Department something over $13,000, and it cost me a corresponding anxiety. I immediately discerned that it was written more for the edification of Congress than for mine ; for Mr. Seward knew full well at the moment of writing it that the Emperor and his Cabinet were all more anxious than any citizen of the United States to hasten the recall of their troops from Mexico, and that they were doing everything that was possible to that end.

" The reception of so lengthy a dispatch by telegraph to my Legation was in itself so entirely unprecedented that the news circulated rapidly through the official departments and the Diplomatic Corps. As a consequence, representatives from many of the other Legations called early the following day to learn what was up ; but the caller most anxious was M. Pereire. Before he arrived I had made up my mind not to communicate the dispatch to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and I contented myself with pulling a long face about the tenor of it to M. Pereire, without revealing anything of its contents except merely saying that, to my regret, *ils sont très sérieux*. I learned early in life that a loaded gun was much more useful in combat than one discharged, and I proposed to myself to leave the tenor of this transatlantic

communication to the imagination rather than to the loose tongues of those whom it might concern. My secretiveness, however, did not keep anybody's imagination in Paris long on the stretch, for the first steamer from New York after the dispatch was written brought it in the *New York Herald*, which confirmed my first impression that it was written for Congress rather than for the Tuileries."

But long before this, Bigelow, who began his mission with such zeal and gusto, was sick of Secretary Seward's "expedients"; sick of Mexico; sick of French ministerial intrigues; sick of President Johnson's political behaviour; sick indeed of his expatriation, and pining for home. In this frame of mind he wrote Seward (July 6) resigning his post:

"It is now about five years since I left the United States. They have been to me years of peculiar anxieties and responsibilities. The position to which, through your friendly partiality, I was called at the death of Mr. Dayton, honourable as it is and far beyond my dreams or my deserts, has never ceased to be a burthen to me. So long as I could suppose that the reasons which led to my selection for this mission remained in force I did not presume to take, or to ask anyone else to take, my personal tastes or convenience into consideration. I was then but too happy to have any place of duty assigned to me in which competent judges thought I might be useful. But I feel that the time is happily arrived when I may be replaced, certainly without prejudice, perhaps with advantage, to the country."

It was not, however, until December—a few days before Christmas—that he finally handed over the Legation to his successor, General Dix. He was given a complimentary banquet by the American Colony. On Dec. 23, 1866, he was received by the Emperor and Empress at the Tuileries.

"The Emperor made a brief speech, thanked me for my good wishes, rejoiced in the good accord of our respective Governments, hoped it would continue, and was pleased to express his personal regret that I was leaving—an emotion, I am sure, he could hardly have felt, for I had been nothing but a thorn in his side from the beginning to the close of my mission. On leaving him I went into an adjoining room to take leave of the Empress, where I found my wife sitting with her. She asked me to take a seat (which was more than

the Emperor did), and wished to know if I was going into Congress or any other public position. I said I was not thinking of anything of the kind; that I would not have retired from so distinguished a position as the one I had been occupying if I had desired any public place.

"'But,' she said, 'one must follow the career in which he has commenced.'

"I replied that I was not reared in diplomacy, and that there were other careers for one's ambition in the United States, out of political life, more congenial to me. I reminded her of her proposal made to me the year previous to visit America one day with her son, and expressed the hope that she would not forget it. She replied that she did not expect to go herself, but she was resolved that the Prince should go for a few months when old enough."

"It was ordered otherwise," reflects Bigelow in recalling this conversation, "and in ways of which she little dreamed."

Two years before the close of the previous century the new Ambassador, General Dix, had first seen the light in New Hampshire and been christened John Adams, after the then President. Entering the Army as a cadet in 1812, by the time he was thirty he had abandoned it for the law.[1]

In President Buchanan's closing months Dix served as Secretary of the Treasury, in which capacity he achieved fame by a single bellicose sentence. He had ordered the return of all the United States revenue cutters in Southern harbours. One captain refused to obey the Secretary's orders and was peremptorily threatened with arrest and treatment as a mutineer. "If," declared Secretary Dix at the close of his despatch, "any man attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot!" The message fired the blood of the admiring millions of the North, and from that moment Dix was a popular hero. On Lincoln's induction he could have had what office he chose. He returned to the Army, was created a Major-General, and after a sojourn in Maryland was sent to New York and given command of the Eastern Department, where he continued to the close of the

[1] "Educated at Montreal, he [Dix] spoke French with the fluency of a native; highly accomplished, and of a most elevated personal character, he had held many of the highest places in the United States, and always discharged his duties in a manner honourable to himself, and to the entire satisfaction of the people."—E. B. Washburne: *Recollections*.

war. Already he was spoken of as a future governor and even as a candidate for the Presidency. Such was the man whom President Johnson appointed to the Paris mission, and who came to be received by the Emperor on December 23, 1866.

Minister Dix's tenure of office is now chiefly remembered in connection with incidents involving two strongly contrasting personages—George Bancroft, the diplomat-historian, and General Cluseret, afterwards one of the leaders of the Commune, who claimed to be a naturalized American.

The first-named of these was an ex-Minister to England and one of those fastidious scholars who are apt to hold cheaply acquired popularity in derision. Bancroft had conceived an unjust prejudice against the statesman whose bombastic injunction had already found a place in the American school readers. He himself had just been appointed Minister at Berlin. Breaking his journey at Paris, he found his diplomatic colleague, General Dix, and the Exposition of 1867 both functioning. Bancroft wished to be present at a notable meeting at which the Emperor was to confer the awards. Reluctantly he applied for tickets to Minister Dix, who, perhaps, having some knowledge of Bancroft's opinion of himself, coldly informed that gentleman that there was no further room available at the ceremony.[1] The historian promptly disproved this by obtaining the requisite tickets from another source.

Time passed. In 1869 Minister Dix read in a newspaper that his fellow-Minister Bancroft had been indulging in one of those pro-German deliverances to which he was prone at Berlin. At a dinner given by him he had referred to the delicate relation in which France and Prussia stood to each other and said, that in case of any difficulty between them the sympathy of the United States would be on the side of Germany; that "we had not forgotten the unfriendly part the Emperor had taken towards us in the rebellion and that we should not fail to manifest our dissatisfaction whenever a proper opportunity should occur."

This awakened Dix's slumbering ire. It seemed to him a shocking indiscretion on Bancroft's part, and when several

[1] Defending himself later, Dix said: "It is not unusual for a Minister on great occasions to be thus frustrated in his efforts to gratify his countrymen."

JOHN A. DIX. [*Wide World Photos.*

Frenchmen spoke to him about it, he at once wrote off to the State Department conveying French opinion on the subject. He related that in particular it had "given the Emperor great annoyance, as his Majesty had counted upon a feeling of mutual kindness and friendship between the United States and France, too stable to be disturbed by reminiscences like those to which Mr. Bancroft had referred."

At the same time Dix thought it his duty to send a line to Bancroft himself, pointing out the unhappy effect of his remarks on French opinion. Bancroft made no response at the time, but when it came to his knowledge that he had actually been made the subject of a despatch to Washington, he became furious. Dix, he alleged, was guilty of "a gross diplomatic impropriety in having used the Emperor's name." [1] Describing the letter he addressed to Dix, the latter wrote:

"My friendly communication to Mr. Bancroft was received with the greatest rudeness. He charged me with making myself a voluntary instrument to bring calumnies against colleagues to the notice of the Government, and he added that such calumnies never could have been repeated by anyone but myself, imputing to me a degree of malice of which no other man living would have been guilty. These indecorous imputations have been made by him a part of his despatch, and I record it as most unjust to myself that they have been accepted as such by the Government. The whole tenor of his letter to myself is aggressive and discourteous, nor is it less absurd."

It so happened that Bancroft had the ear of President Johnson to a far greater degree than Dix, and his despatch arraigning the conduct of his diplomatic colleague at Paris was so damaging that the President felt he should pronounce an opinion. It was Dix, he said, not Bancroft, who had been indiscreet. The martial upholder of the American flag protested against "this partiality and rebuke" and he continued vehemently to protest, even after Andrew Johnson had ceased to hold office. He wrote:

[1] Dix was very ironic about this. "If," he wrote, "Mr. Bancroft finds something so sacred in the names of sovereigns that it must not be mentioned, it would be a fair subject of enquiry by his own Government, whether he (Bancroft) is as thoroughly imbued with its spirit as—well, as a good American ought to be."

"Mr. Bancroft's letter which the late President has allowed to be made a part of the archives of the State Department is scarcely less offensive to the Imperial Government than it is to me. Nearly one half of it proceeds upon the hypothesis that the Emperor may be induced to declare war against North Germany to prevent a closer union with South Germany and of arguments and facts to show that in such an event the United States would have reason to sympathize with North Germany."

In view of international developments, then so imminent, the whole episode illumines the diplomatic opinion of the period. Dix, for his part, firmly believed that Napoleon III wished to maintain the peace of Europe. Bancroft, suspecting Napoleon, openly advocated a union between North and South Germany, which would effectually curb the Imperial power, or, in Dix's opinion, probably precipitate an armed conflict.[1]

The other trouble and anxiety to which Minister Dix was subjected during his mission may be here summarized.

Cluseret, a Frenchman who had emigrated to America and served under General Frémont, had later been reported by Minister J. Q. Adams at London as having violated his confidence and that of the Government of New York State by obtaining information through the medium of the London Legation and using it against the British. This was in 1861, and after a Fenian attempt on Chester Castle, Cluseret fled to France.

In the autumn of 1867 Cluseret called on Dix with a letter from Governor Fenton of New York. He said he wished to procure from the Imperial Government certain documents relating to the French Army, and left a list. The Minister found that the documents asked for were of too confidential a nature to communicate even to a friendly Government, and refused to apply for them. He even grew a little suspicious. Not long afterwards he noticed a series of articles in the *Phare de la Loire* attacking the Imperial Government and full of ridicule against the Army.

[1] Bismarck is reported to have said that in the event of another European war the United States would take part in it and would be on the side of North Germany. Dix thought this opinion was probably derived by the Chancellor from Bancroft.—Dix to Fish.

As a sample of Cluseret's style we may cite the following :

" Have you ever conversed with a sensible man concerning the Imperial Guard ? For myself, I never meet with one of those parti-coloured and bespangled soldiers without being conscious of a disagreeable impression. What is the use of all this medley of colours, gilding, fur, spangles and tinsel of every hue and kind ?

" The Imperial Guard in 1868 gives me the idea of a rabbit soup with the rabbit left out, or an omelette without eggs."

It was not perhaps very heinous, but it gave offence to the French Government, and coming from one who declared himself to be an American citizen, the French Minister of Justice asked the American Minister to have the goodness to inform him precisely who this Cluseret was. Dix told him. Shortly afterwards the " general " came out with a more serious attack on the French Army in—of all places, but no other paper was available—the columns of *L'Art*. On this occasion the defamatory author was proceeded against and sentenced to two months' imprisonment and a fine of a thousand francs. Dix wrote to his Government :

" Strictures like this are perfectly well suited to the meridian of Washington, but in Paris, St. Petersburg and the other great capitals of Europe they are an offence, which no one knows better than General Cluseret."

On first being cited to appear Cluseret had claimed General Dix's protection as an American citizen, protesting that he had " a perfect right to do in France what a Frenchman is permitted to do in the United States." But although he then refused to intervene, after sentence was pronounced Dix offered to procure a remission. But the general would " accept no favour from the Imperial Government," and forthwith went into hiding.

" The American people," he wrote to Dix, " are as much bound to protect me against the barbarous French laws as against the barbarous laws of Africa."

Cluseret wished to pose as a champion of liberty ; but his great opportunity did not come for a year or two, when the Paris Commune were teaching the world all the beauties which they attached to the phrase.

Meanwhile, Cluseret's national status was being questioned by the French Government, and they were not at all satisfied by any proofs which were forthcoming that he was really what he pretended to be—an American citizen. As a matter of fact, as it turned out years later, when he returned to France and was elected a French Deputy, he had never taken the oath of American allegiance, which was only implicit in his American war service. In any case, the whole question of naturalization was in a most unsatisfactory state, and Dix was instructed to press for the conclusion of a Naturalization Treaty between the two countries. He approached the then Foreign Minister, M. de Moustier, but with little success.

"The Marquis de Moustier [wrote Dix, December 26, 1868] is one of the most polished gentlemen of the Court, always courteous, kind and conciliatory. But the public business has not been properly performed under his administration of the Foreign Office. Many of my colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps have been greatly annoyed by delays in the decision of questions brought before him, but none perhaps more so than myself. I have, for instance, spoken to him five or six times since July last in regard to the negotiation of a treaty on the naturalization question, but I ascertained that as late as November he had not mentioned the subject to the Emperor. Other matters of less urgency were delayed in like manner, and I took measures about a fortnight ago to have his Majesty advised unofficially of my dissatisfaction."

Moustier's successor, the Marquis de la Valette, ex-diplomat and Minister of the Interior, had married Mrs. Wells of Boston, widow of an American banker in Paris. Yet despite this enviable advantage nothing was done by the time Dix had resigned his charge and been succeeded by a new Minister, Elihu B. Washburne. The general took his leave May 23, 1869.

As an illustration of Dix's reasoning and his prescience there may be cited one of his official despatches only nine months before he left France, and only two years before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War.

On August 7, 1868, he wrote to the Secretary of State:

"I may quote a remark made a few days ago by one of

the most distinguished military men in France when his wife, pointing to one of their little boys, who was displaying some martial weapon, said 'he will make a brave general when he grows up,' and the father replied, '*When he is of my age there will be no standing armies in Europe.*' I know this opinion to be held by other distinguished persons, several of them military men. Our experience in the late war—the rapidity with which we assembled, organized, equipped and disciplined large armies, and the equal rapidity with which they disintegrated and the men enrolled in them were restored to their professional and industrial pursuits—have created a profound impression all over Europe. With this example before them I do not believe the countries who bear the enormous burden of the existing armaments and who see millions of men withdrawn from productive labour, will long submit to such a violation of all natural, social and political justice. It is quite certain that the continuance of the system a century longer would dwarf the population of Europe and prove a most serious drawback to its prosperity."

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Some years after Bigelow returned to America he served (1875–7) as Secretary of State for New York and later interested himself in various public measures and institutions. He also edited the works of Franklin, and wrote his own autobiography, gradually becoming widely known as a sage and one of the Nestors of American journalism. He died in 1911.

Dix was elected Governor of New York from 1873 to 1875, dying four years later, at the age of eighty-one.

CHAPTER XVII

WASHBURNE (1869–77)

"It was to me an entry upon a new career and into a field in which I had never had any experience."

The words were penned by the new Minister, Elihu B. Washburne, late Congressman from Illinois and for a short period Secretary of State in after-years, when looking back upon the stirring events of his famous and lengthy mission.[1] He goes on to say, in the course of pages of picturesque writing:

"Paris, then the most attractive city in the world, was bright and beautiful, as it always is in that vernal season of the year. The Emperor, residing at the Tuileries, was in the midst of a brilliant Court, and was surrounded with glittering splendour. Princes and Dukes, Marquises, Counts and Barons, maintained their butterfly existence, and the *grandes dames*, in their splendid toilettes, promenaded in their gilded phaetons on the magnificent Avenue of the Champs Élysées, or in the winding and shady alleys of the Forest of Boulogne. Milliners in the rue de la Paix, tailors in the Chaussée d'Antin, sober old merchants in the rue St. Honoré, grand proprietors of immense establishments like the Bon Marché and the Louvre, the bankers on the rue Laffitte, and the little shopkeepers and the barbers on the Boulevards, reaped rich harvests from the great outside world, which poured its gold into the lap of Paris, and, in return, carried to all lands and into every clime all that ingenuity and skill could invent to gratify the taste and tempt the appetite.

"The cry of '*Vive l'Empereur*,' uttered by the courtiers and parasites, was often heard in the streets, and was responded to by a giddy throng in Paris, which, flattered by the counterfeit consideration of the Government, dazzled by the glitter of the Court, or fattening on the wealth of royalty, abandoned itself to the falsehood of pleasant dreams, and

[1] *Recollections of a Minister to France*, 1869–77.

bowed down before the false glory and the material strength of the Empire.

" The United States, having astonished all Europe by triumphantly crushing out the most stupendous rebellion the world had ever known, and after one of the most gigantic wars in history, had bounded forward to a position of the first rank among the nations of the earth."

At this period the member of the Court designated the " Maître des Cérémonies, Introducteur des Ambassadeurs," was the Baron Feuillet de Conches. He was, in Washburne's words, an

" amiable old gentleman who had devoted his life to the collecting of autographs, and had the largest and most valuable collection in Paris, and probably in the world. On the day appointed for the presentation of my letters of credence, he appeared at my lodgings with two large state carriages ; the first one to be occupied by the baron and myself, and the second one by my secretaries. Proceeding to the Tuileries, we entered and found the Emperor and many members of his Court awaiting us in the Hall of Ceremonies. Standing a little in front of the officials who surrounded him, I was formally presented to him. I then made to him my presentation speech, and delivered into his hands my letters of credence."

The Emperor replied in good English and " in an off-hand manner. He referred to the amicable feeling that had existed without interruption between the two countries for a hundred years and concurred with me in a hope of its continuation."

Washburne's arrival in Paris synchronized with an election for members of the Corps Législatif, which under the constitution of the Empire took place once in six years. It began on the Sunday of his presentation to the Emperor and continued through the next day. He observed it and all other manifestations with keen interest.

" In Paris, during the last years of the Empire, and prior to the breaking out of the war in 1870, there were certain appearances of prosperity, happiness and content ; but they were like the fruit of the Dead Sea, and to the last degree deceptive.

" Beneath all the outside show there was to be heard the deep rumbling of popular discontent. The people were

dissatisfied, restless and uneasy. They considered that their rights and liberties had been trampled upon, and their discontent was often made manifest in Paris by their turbulent gatherings on the Boulevards, which had so often to be dispersed by the police and squadrons of cavalry, whose clashing sabres and sounding bugles were frequently heard in the streets. These gatherings were called 'attroupements.' Thousands of individuals quickly assembling, idlers, labourers and loafers, sometimes completely blocked up the way for squares. Night after night large numbers would be arrested as rioters and revolutionists, and locked up in the prison of Mazas, or sent to the casemates of Fort Bicêtre. I had, at this time, a somewhat curious experience with an American who was one of the number 'gobbled up.' Though the Prefect of Police had issued a proclamation warning all peaceable people to keep out of the streets and not to mix up with the rioters, yet our American friend, his curiosity going beyond all reasonable bounds, found himself one night arrested, and with about eight hundred others taken to Fort Bicêtre, where he was obliged to sleep on straw, and had but very little to eat, and that of the worst quality. He was soon, however, enabled to get word to me; and upon my application to the authorities, was immediately released, and came to tell me a pitiful story of abuse and even of robbery. The authorities did not deny that he had had a pretty hard time; but they did most strenuously deny that he had been robbed by the police authorities. Though he was altogether to blame for mixing himself up with the crowd of rioters, after having been warned of the consequences, he was very much dissatisfied with his treatment, and thought our Government ought to take it up and 'vindicate him.' This was often the case; and I found that whenever an American got into trouble, he thought that our country ought to go to war at once to vindicate him and its power and authority."

Washbourne soon established cordial relations with the Emperor and formed great hopes of concluding a much-needed postal Treaty. The postal arrangements between the two countries were creating the utmost dissatisfaction among Americans in Paris and among the business public. The French Government charged the most exorbitant rates of postage, and the international telegraph system was well-nigh unworkable. But despite Washburne's efforts during

several years the Americans got no relief in respect to postal facilities until after the establishment of the Universal Postal Union in 1874.

The Washburnes were invited to the palace at Compiègne for several days. The Minister found there between sixty and a hundred other guests, among them many of the most distinguished persons in France. He also found "two or three American ladies who, without either title, rank or fashion, were quite the equals of the French dames in point of good looks, manners, intelligence and exquisite toilets." Every evening there was dancing. Although no longer young, the American Minister occasionally took a hand in the dance, a fact which occasionally got into the French papers.

"I saw afterwards that our own papers had their fun out of the incident, and represented me as dancing a 'breakdown' in the palace of Compiègne. That was not exactly true, as my dancing was very moderate, and after the modern style. I considered that my best dancing days were over. Twenty years before, I could have danced a jig with any Frenchman, not a professional, and without any fear of being outdone."

When he returned from Compiègne he attended the opening of the new Corps Législatif, "one of the grandest of all the stately pageants of France," at which the whole Diplomatic Corps was present, "all glittering in uniform and tinsel, except myself. Congress had very wisely prohibited its diplomats from indulging in the nonsense and flummery of court dress. I did not see but that, in my plain suit of black, I got along as well as any of them." [1]

In January 1870 the new Minister made his first presentations of Americans at Court. Those presentations were notable events, particularly in the estimation of the very large American colony, and a feature in the social and official life of Paris. This colony was composed of wealthy and intelligent people who had generally lived in the cities at home and had seen much of society.

"The wives and daughters were remarkable for their beauty, their graceful manners and superb costumes. These

[1] This avowal affords an interesting key to Washburne's character, as also his declaration that pay in the American diplomatic service was adequate in his day.

presentations were the subject of conversation in fashionable American circles long before they took place.

" The chamberlain of the palace was very liberal in giving out invitations to my compatriots. Indeed, there were a greater number of Americans presented than of any other nationality, even the English. As the time approached, I was advised that I would be authorized to make twenty-eight presentations; that being known, American society was all agog. A presentation was considered to be *the thing*, as it gave the person presented a status in society which could not be had without it. Many Americans desiring to be presented—a number greatly in excess of that I was permitted to present—it became to me a matter of great embarrassment to discriminate between those who, from their rank and position, had equal claims."

Washburne records that on the evening of the presentation there was a great excitement in the American colony.

" The ladies had already procured their magnificent toilettes, and the gentlemen their court costumes. The law having forbidden me to wear a court dress,[1] by virtue of my position I was not obliged to put on any uniform, and went simply in evening dress. Everything was arranged at the palace in the most gorgeous style, and the most perfect arrangements had been made for the occasion. All the *salons* were beautifully lighted and decorated and the echoes of delightful music fell upon all ears. My compatriots, the ladies in their superb dresses, and the gentlemen in court costume, all met in the *salon* designated for that purpose.

" When the time for the presentation arrived, all entered the grand hall of reception and took their places under the direction of the chamberlain in two long files, the gentlemen in one and the ladies in the other. At a given hour, the Emperor and Empress entered this hall of reception, and when the time came for the presentation of my *nationaux* to them, I went down the line occupied by the gentlemen and introduced each one of them personally to ' His Majesty.' Speaking English quite well, the Emperor had a pleasant word for them all. After the presentation of the gentlemen to the Emperor, it came my turn to introduce the ladies to the Empress. Nothing could exceed the grace and cordiality of her manner toward my fair countrywomen. After accompanying her along the long line and introducing her specially

[1] Washburne was mistaken in this.

to every lady, we reached the foot of the line. I had familiarized myself with the names of the large number of ladies, and there was no hesitancy in my presentations. The Empress was apparently surprised at my success in calling out all the names. She said to me, ' How is it possible, Mr. Washburne, that you could remember all those names ? ' The truth was that my electioneering through nine congressional campaigns stood me in good part. I had found that the recollection of names and faces is a cultivated talent. It is vastly important that a candidate should remember the people to whom he is introduced, and I had made it a point, always, when I was introduced to anyone, to fix in my mind something in regard to the person and manner, so that I should not forget them. And so it was, after following this up for nearly twenty years, I very rarely forgot the name and the face of any person to whom I was introduced, even in the most casual manner."

It was plain that the Washburnes were prepared to extract to the full all the pleasure from their new position. But, alas, the fount of enjoyment was soon dried up, never to return, so far as the higher society of Paris was concerned. A few brief months, and the whole scene was changed for ever.

The war-clouds soon darkened the horizon and on July 19, 1870, the French declared the long-meditated war on Prussia. Hostilities had scarcely begun than defeat succeeded defeat for the French, who found themselves outnumbered in men, material and artillery. On August 4 Weissenburg was lost, and two days later Wörth and Forbach. At the news of Napoleon's capitulation at Sedan a revolution broke out in Paris and on September 4 a Republic was proclaimed. A fortnight later began the siege of Paris by the Prussians.

Meanwhile, the American Minister had been requested to take charge of the German Embassy, which he did, hoisting over it the American flag.

" The *concierge* of the Embassy having been forced to leave, I placed it under the charge of two young and trustworthy Americans, who had been residents of my own congressional district, in Illinois. These young men courageously occupied the Embassy until the close of hostilities ; and, though sometimes threats were made, there was never any violence offered to the Embassy or its guardians."

No sooner was the Government of National Defence installed than Washburne, in imitation of his diplomatic predecessor, Rush, determined to be the first to acknowledge it. His action created great popular enthusiasm.

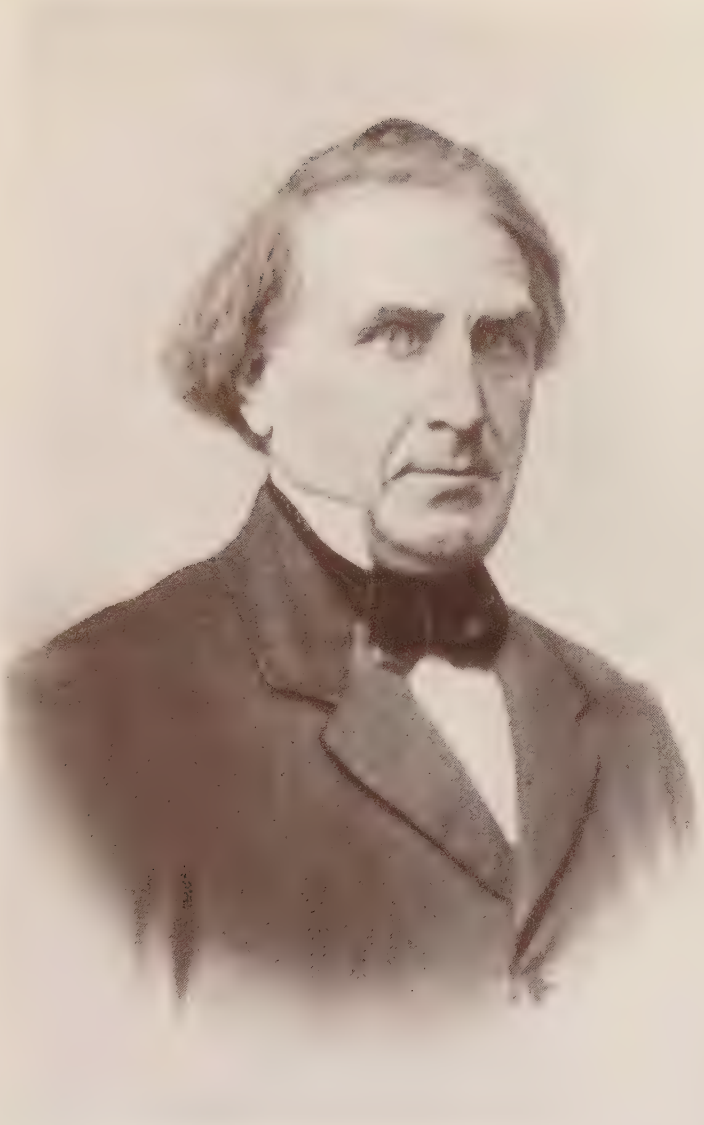
"Masses of people paraded in the streets, bearing the American and French flags, and repeating the cries, '*Vive l'Amérique*,' '*Vive la France.*' This feeling found expression by their waiting upon me and tendering their thanks and congratulations for what I had done in respect to the recognition.

"On September 8 a large delegation, composed of very respectable gentlemen, waited upon me in my private room and read a short address begging that I would transmit to my Government the thanks of a great number of French citizens for the promptness and cordiality with which I had recognized the French Government.

"For several days companies and regiments of the National Guard appeared in the street in front of the Legation with music playing and French and American flags flying. Halting in front of the Legation, their cheers were continued until I stepped upon the balcony and bid them welcome, and thanked them for the compliment they had paid my Government. Then a committee would be selected to pay their respects to me in the Legation. This committee would consist of officers decked out in full military toggery. They would be very effusive and cordial in their thanks, and the principal man of the delegation would end his complimentary remarks by adopting the custom of the First Revolution in giving me the *accolade* (that is, a kiss on both cheeks)."

On September 19, after the gates of Paris were closed, Washburne left the Avenue Montaigne, where he had been lodging, and returned to his home, No. 75 Avenue de l'Impératrice. Reaching there late in the afternoon, he found it in strange contrast to what it had been in the peaceful times before the war.

"The first thing that I saw, as I proceeded up the avenue, was two cannon, placed directly in front of my house. Before the large door on the rue Spontini, which entered into the court, were the *caissons*, the artillerymen and horses, and they were strung out all along the Avenue Bugeaud. The soldiers were cooking their suppers, and every few minutes



E. B. WASHBURNE. [*Wide World Photos.*

was heard the random discharge of a gun. Yet all in the house was quiet, and there was no occasion to realize the least sense of danger. The grand entrance into the Bois de Boulogne, which was very near my residence, was being fortified, and there were no carriages passing on the avenue. That great artery through which had passed for so many years all the royalty, wealth, fashion, frivolity and vice of Paris, was cut, and there was now silence. Many friends called on the evening of that day, and we all wondered if the world had ever before witnessed so great a change in so short a time. It seemed to us all like a dream ; we felt for the first time that we were cut off from the outside world."

With all his approval of the Revolution and the new order of things, Washburne could not shut his eyes to the moral and social change which had been suddenly wrought in Paris.

"It was amazing to see how quickly the demoralizing process set in after the fall of the Empire. Up to that time, I think Paris was one of the best governed cities in the world, speaking strictly of the municipal administration. The police were vigilant, alert and honest, and life and property were everywhere safe. I had never seen the time, up to the revolution of the 4th of September, that I would have been afraid to have visited the most remote and unfrequented streets in the city ; for everywhere were to be found the most watchful policemen on their different beats. But this city government practically fell with the Empire, and in the absence of governmental and political regulations, there was much disorder ; the streets were filled with the most obscene and disgusting literature, and the vilest caricatures were cried on the streets by men and boys, and sometimes even by young girls."

A voluminous correspondence took place between Bismarck and Washburne throughout the siege, marked by much friendliness on both sides. The Chancellor

"declined any responsibility for the sufferings to which the residents will find themselves exposed when the resources are exhausted, and when owing to the waste laid all around Paris by order of the French Government at an extent of three or four days' marching, it will be impossible to provide the survivors with food or to transport them beyond the zone of destruction."

Bismarck added :

" I take the liberty of earnestly calling your attention to considerations detailed therein and bearing directly upon the interests of those American residents who, either by their condition of life or for want of means, have been obliged to remain at Paris." [1]

On November 16, the fifty-ninth day of the siege, the Minister notes in his Diary :

" Legation full of people, reading all the old English and American newspapers which I have left upon the table in the Secretary's room. As they contain no war news that could be made use of, I was glad in this way to gratify my countrymen, who for so long a time had nothing of our home news. There was a great deal of talk about the fall of Metz and what was called the ' treason of Bazaine.' "

The Secretary of State telegraphed Washburne that the President had instructed him to say that whenever either the American Minister or the Consul or both wished to leave Paris they were at liberty to do so, going as the other diplomatic representatives had done, to Tours. To this Washburne replied (December 3) that :

" Great as is my desire to join my family, from whom I have been so long separated, I consider it my duty to remain in Paris, at least for a time. Paris was the seat of the Government of the country to which I am accredited as Minister, and it was the seat of the present Provisional Government of the National Defence, which had been duly recognized by the United States."

In consequence of this decision, to which he adhered to the end, Washburne found his hands full indeed. There were the Germans, for instance, nearly all of whom he thought he had persuaded or assisted to leave Paris. On January 19 he wrote Bismarck :

" I have been astonished at the number of Germans who, as it turns out, were left in the city when the gates were closed. Having exhausted their last resources, and finding themselves in a state of the most absolute destitution, they have applied to me for protection and aid, which I have so far been enabled to extend to them from the funds placed in

[1] Bismarck to Washburne, October 29, 1870.

my hands by the royal government. The number of these people amounts to-day to two thousand three hundred and eighty-five (2,385), and it is certain, had there not been someone here to protect and aid them, many must have inevitably perished of cold and starvation. My position in relation to these people and to your Government is known to the people of Paris, and as the siege wears on and the exasperation is intensified, I now find myself exposed to the hostility of a certain portion of the population of the city. While your military authorities seem to be agitated by the gravest fears in relation to my despatch-bag, I am daily violently assailed by a portion of the Paris Press as a ' Prussian representative ' and a ' Prussian sympathizer,' and a short time since it was proposed in one of the clubs that I should be hung—rather a pleasant diversion in these dreary days of siege through which we are passing.

" I shall only add that, so long as I am the diplomatic representative of my country in Paris, I shall discharge every duty (even to the end and in the face of every circumstance) that I owe to my own Government, and every duty that I have, by its direction, assumed toward the subjects of the North German Confederation."

Paris held out until January 28, 1871, when the city capitulated. The Government convoked a National Assembly at Bordeaux, by whom Thiers was named chief executive, and the treaty of peace was there ratified.

" The news of the convention of the 28th January, 1871, providing for the armistice, was very badly received by the great mass of the lower class of the people of Paris, and particularly by the National Guard, which had done no fighting during the siege, but had been fed and housed in the best manner possible, under the circumstances, by the Government of the National Defence. Those who had fought least made the greatest noise, and were more furious than anybody else to continue the war *à outrance*."

The treaty having provided for the entry of 30,000 German troops into Paris, accordingly on March 1 the Germans entered the city by the Porte Maillot, marching down the Champs Élysées.

" The Bourse was closed by the order of the syndics of 'Change. No newspapers appeared on that day except the *Journal Officiel*. No placards were posted upon the walls of

Paris," and Washburne could hear of no act of violence of any significance.

The evacuation of the Germans was followed by the insurrection of March 18, which led up to " the most horrible events and consequences ever recorded in history." On that day the Commune was proclaimed and the regular Government of France was driven out and established itself at Versailles. Washburne this time followed the Government. Versailles being over-crowded he was only able to hire a small room in a side-street.[1] " For the first time since the foundation of our Government was the Minister of the United States obliged to write his official despatch from any place in France other than the City of Paris." Nevertheless, Washburne informed the Secretary of State that while his official residence and the Legation would be technically at Versailles he should " go into Paris every day and occupy my Legation, in which there had been no change whatever." After the assassination by the Communards of Generals Clément Thomas and Lecomte and the massacre in the rue de la Paix on March 22 the reign of terror had fairly begun.

" About the middle of May things had grown worse and worse in Paris, and the Commune had become to the last degree desperate. All the churches were ordered to be closed or converted into club-houses. That immense edifice, the historic church of St. Eustache, had been opened, as I have said, as a favourite place of resort for the revolutionary population of the central part of the city. All the convents had been shut up and all the priests and a large number of the Sisters of Charity had been imprisoned. The valuables belonging to the churches and convents had been stolen and carried off. The Alsatians and German Lorrainers were coming to me in greater and greater numbers for my *laissez-passers*, and on the 11th of May I gave two hundred and forty-three, making the whole number three thousand four hundred and seventy-four."

It was on May 16 that the Vendôme Column was finally pulled down. Notice had been given from day to day that it was to fall at a certain hour, and immense crowds went to witness its overthrow.

[1] No. 13 rue Mademoiselle.

Washburne wrote later :

" The 22nd May, 1871, will ever be considered an important day in the history of Paris and France. It was nine weeks and two days since the insurrection had broken out and those weeks had run wearily on in the expectation that each week would be the last."

His own position was very serious and one of increasing responsibility.

" Now, the Versailles troops had arrived. Word soon passed along the defences that the troops had entered the city, carrying dismay to the Communards, who very suddenly left their positions to get into the city by the gates of Auteuil and Passy. When inside they took up a strong position in the streets of Passy. About the same time, toward four o'clock on the morning of Monday, General Douay, after a short struggle, captured the Château de la Muette, and there he found about six hundred Communards, who were trying to conceal themselves in that immense château. They were all taken prisoners. It was at the break of day on Monday, May 22nd, that the tricolor floated over the Arc de Triomphe.

" There had been but very little fighting up to this time, and the advancing forces met with but little loss. The Porte Dauphine, which was so near my residence, on the Avenue Joséphine, was taken during the night. A sharp fight took place at the Champ de Mars soon after daylight on Monday, and, after two hours' struggle, the insurgents abandoned that quarter. A battery was put up at the Arc de Triomphe, which swept over the Champs Élysées about the time I was taking my coffee at eight o'clock in the morning in the rue Bassano. Soon a Communard battery at the Tuileries was shelling the Arc de Triomphe. Dombrowski, who was one of the military leaders of the Commune, was killed at the Château de la Muette on Monday morning."

The leaders of the Commune grew reckless and decreed the burning of the Tuileries and other public buildings, as well as the murder of Monseigneur Darboy, Archbishop of Paris, and other hostages, all of which orders were eventually carried out. The American Minister went himself to view the scene of destruction. The side-walks of the Boulevard Malesherbes were filled with horses, baggage-wagons and artillery carriages.

" Proceeding farther, I reached the church of the Madeleine at the head of the rue Royale ; many of the buildings of that great thoroughfare were in flames, and others seemed literally to have been torn in pieces by the fire of the artillery. Going farther up the Boulevard des Capucines, I found many of the buildings riddled, and upon the side-walk was a dead National Guard ; in a side-street, a short distance from there, I saw yet another dead body of an insurgent. People passing by looked on them with apparent satisfaction. I continued on to the Place Vendôme, which had been evacuated during the night, and for the first time saw the world-renowned Column Vendôme, as it lay in the position in which it had fallen.

" The Tuileries were still burning, and the flames were bursting out in a part of the building where they had not before reached. It seemed at that moment that it would be impossible to save the Louvre, but, most fortunately, some Government troops reached that point in season to save the palace, with all its treasures of art and historical interest. I returned to my Legation about noon. During the afternoon we could distinctly see fires raging in many directions.

" The night of the 24th of May was one of fire and battle and burnings, throughout, and when morning came the fires were still raging. The great Hôtel de Ville, with all its traditions and souvenirs of history, existed no longer. The Cour des Comptes, the Court of Cassation, the Préfecture of Police, and the celebrated old prison of the Conciergerie had shared the same fate. All had been the work of organized incendiaries ; the insurrectionists had surely done everything in their power to destroy Paris. If the entry of the troops had been delayed much longer, this destruction would certainly have been completed."

With considerable satisfaction Washburne wrote to his Government that, during all the horrible scenes in Paris within the last ten weeks, no material damage had been done to the property of the Americans, or to the property of the Germans with whose interests he had been charged. Some few Americans had been arrested, but all were immediately released on his application.

" The number of Germans and Alsatians whose release from prison I had obtained was quite large. Among the number were the four German nuns who had been seized at the convent of Picpus. I do not know that I was ever

more touched by anything during the progress of these events than I was in being called upon by eleven nuns, among them these four, who, after being set at liberty, came to the Legation in a body to thank me for my intervention in their behalf."

Ever since Archbishop Darboy's arrest Washburne had endeavoured to save him and his companions.

The entry of the troops into Paris on Monday, May 22, and their advance into the heart of the city during that forenoon, completely cut off communication between the legation and the prison of Mazas, where the Archbishop had been confined. It was, therefore, utterly impossible for the Minister to see or write to him.

"On May 24 the Archbishop, President Bonjean and the other victims were all placed against the walls which enclosed the sombre edifice of the prison of La Roquette. The Archbishop was placed at the head of the line, and the fiends who murdered him scratched with their knives a cross upon the stone in the wall at the very place where his head must have touched it at the moment when they fired their fatal shots. He did not fall at the first volley, but stood erect, calm and immovable, and before the other discharges came which launched him into eternity he crossed himself three times upon his forehead. The other victims all fell together. The marks of the bullets after they had passed through their bodies were visible on the wall. The Archbishop was afterwards mutilated and his abdomen cut open. All the bodies were then put into a cart and removed to Père Lachaise, which was but a few squares off, where they were thrown into a common ditch, from which, however, they were happily rescued before decomposition had taken place.[1]

"In all the six or seven interviews I had with him in prison, except the last, I always found him cheerful and sometimes even gay, and never uttering a word of complaint. No man could be with him without being captivated by his cheerful disposition, his Christian spirit and interesting conversation. He was learned, accomplished and eloquent; and, above all, he was good. In his religious and political sentiments he was most liberal. He met his fate with the firmness of a Christian martyr, and anyone who knew him could but join in a tribute of sincere mourning. For myself,

[1] The funeral of the Archbishop and the other victims took place at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, June 7, 1871.

I can never think of this illustrious martyr without being overwhelmed with emotions that I am scarcely able to express."

When it was finally suppressed, few people were aware of the immense proportions which the Paris Commune had assumed. It had rationed over 100,000 soldiers daily and commanded 1,700 pieces of cannon and mitrailleuses. Some 700,000 weapons of all kinds were afterwards taken from the Communards.

"But [reported Washburne significantly] what must ever excite amazement is the knowledge of the vast number of people in Paris at this time who were not only in sympathy with the Commune, but who abetted and sustained it in its career of crime and blood. The minority, embracing the better class of Paris at this time, was completely cowed and subdued by this vast insurrectionary mass of population."

After the recapture of Paris by the French Government Washburne thought it high time that France and Germany should resume their diplomatic relations and accordingly he sought to be relieved from his charge of German interests. In June Count von Waldersee arrived with the following letter from Prince Bismarck:

"His Majesty has commanded me to convey to your Excellency his grateful acknowledgments for the zeal and kindness you have devoted to the interests of the German residents under circumstances of extraordinary difficulty and with corresponding sacrifice of time and personal comfort. I beg to add the reiterated expression of the sense of obligation I shall ever preserve for the uniform promptness and courtesy I have experienced from you in a business connection of nearly a twelve month's duration.

"With sentiments of the highest consideration, I have the honour to be your Excellency's obedient servant,

"BISMARCK."

By an act of the Assembly, M. Thiers was given the title of President of the French Republic, and, being confirmed in power, Minister Washburne called upon him with his personal felicitations and to congratulate him in the name of the Government of the United States.

On January 1, 1872, M. Thiers, as President, did not

receive the Diplomatic Corps in Paris, as had been understood, but gave notice that he would give the usual New Year's audience to the body at Versailles.

"It was a dismal and dirty ride through the mud out to the old city, and the reception was rather a cheap affair. None of the diplomatists were in uniform, though many of them wore their decorations. They were simply in dinner dress. The members of the corps met in the ante-room before twelve o'clock, and at precisely noon the doors were opened into the reception-room, and all rushed in, pell-mell, without arranging themselves with regard to rank or seniority. M. Thiers soon made his appearance in the room, but no formal speeches were made. The President simply shook hands with the various members of the body, and in five minutes the performance was over and all the members of the corps left the room pell-mell as they had entered it. This reception was at the Prefecture of the Department of the Seine and Oise, which was the official residence of the Prefect of the Department, and a beautiful little palace."

Washburne records that in 1875 there began to be much talk in French circles about the erection of a statue of Liberty designed by M. Bartholdi. M. Laboulaye, then a Deputy, and considered one of the most distinguished men in France and a great admirer of the United States, was prominent in the matter. To bring the project into more prominence in Paris, a grand banquet was given at the Hôtel du Louvre on the evening of November 8, which was largely attended and enlisted much support for a great national gift to America.[1]

Some time before the presidential election of 1876, irrespective of the result, Minister Washburne had requested his recall in the following spring. It was, however, not until September 1877 that he was relieved by his successor. In the interval he visited Berlin, where he was, considering his great services to Germany, invited to dine with the Emperor.

"My reception by the Emperor and the Empress was of the most cordial character, and the dinner passed off most pleasantly. I sat by the side of the Emperor at table, and

[1] The statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World" was not, however, completed and dedicated until October 1886.

found him very agreeable. He was, as was also the Empress, full of expressions of gratitude to me for all that I had done for the Germans in France during the Franco-German War. The next day I was invited to dine with the Crown Prince and Princess at Potsdam, and on going there I was somewhat surprised to be met by the Emperor and Empress. It was a dinner *en famille*, and a very pleasant one."

On returning to Paris, Washburne learnt of the death of Adolphe Thiers. He had arranged to leave for America on September 10th, but he felt he could not go away without calling on the statesman's widow.

" While I was in the house I met Gambetta, and he seemed to be utterly broken down with grief. He spoke of M. Thiers as the most wonderful man of modern times, and said that France had met with an irreparable loss in his death."

When Washburne finally surrendered the Legation his term of service, from the signing of his appointment in March 1869, was eight and a half years—a longer continuous period than that of any of his predecessors or successors.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Washburne, on his return to America, settled in Chicago, and engaged in the preparation of his memoirs and other literary tasks; dying in 1887.

[*Wide World Photos.*

E. L. NOYES.

CHAPTER XVIII

NOYES, MORTON AND McLANE (1877–89)

When his immediate successor arrived in Paris (August 25, 1877) Washburne was still absent in Germany, as has just been narrated. A week later, he returned to present General Edward Follansbee Noyes, before himself sailing for home.

The new Minister was an Ohioan, who had commanded a division in the Civil War and had left a limb on the battlefield. This mutilation would be no drawback to his popularity in Paris, any more than it had been in the case of Gouverneur Morris.

A recent military predecessor, General Dix, had made his bow at the Élysée in that simple civilian garb so belauded by and eulogized by the Jeffersonian school. On this occasion it was a soldier who would receive a soldier; President MacMahon would be attired in the full uniform of a French marshal, and the Chef de Protocol (M. Mollard) ventured to hint that it would be highly agreeable to the head of the State if the American Minister would present himself in military dress. General Noyes did so, and those in attendance so complimented him on his sartorial elegance that he decided to retain his uniform for all future functions of state.

A few days later the Minister was called upon to don it for a more melancholy event. This was the funeral of France's great statesman, Thiers, to whose remains half a million persons paid honour. Noyes wrote home:

"During the solemn ceremony the rain fell incessantly, but this did not deter the multitude from manifesting by their presence at the burial their sympathy and sorrow. The most perfect order everywhere prevailed. Occasionally there was a shout of 'Vive la République!' 'Vive la France!' or 'Vive Thiers!' but whenever this occurred the gendarmes, by a motion of the hand, enjoined silence, and their signals

seemed to be telegraphed along the whole line, producing the desired effect. I do not [continues the Minister impressively] believe that in any city of the world more perfect order and decorum could have been maintained. The unaffected sorrow of the people seemed to allay for the time all political excitement.

"For a day or two the Republican leaders were evidently stunned by the unexpected death of M. Thiers, but so far as I can observe they have recovered their confidence and are as determined as ever. M. Gambetta told me on the day of the funeral that the result on election day would not be unfavourably affected by Thiers' death; and M. Jules Simon remarked to me that the life of the Republic was not dependent upon the life of any man. . . . Gambetta thinks the Republicans will carry 400 members. M. Thiers a few days before his death expressed the same opinion. The contest would be bitter, but there would be no overturning. Leaders hate each other, and it is war to knife. The prosecution and sentence of Gambetta does not tend to soften political asperities."

Minister Noyes reports the sensation caused by President MacMahon's Manifesto of September 19.

"Very little idea of the excitement and apprehension which it has produced can be obtained from the press. Editors representing the opposition are nearly all in prison, and anything like free expression is likely to bridge the way from the editorial room to the jail."

There was certainly an uneasy feeling in Paris at the time and much anxiety concerning the future of the Third Republic.

Just then, the great Paris Exposition of 1878 was in prospect, and the French Government was anxious that America should be fully represented. Noyes thought it would be an embarrassment to him if the Hayes Administration should neglect steps to this end. In order to place the whole project before Secretary Evarts the Legation's First Secretary, Hitt, was sent to Washington, equipped with all the available French plans.

At the elections in October 1877 Noyes reported that the Bonapartists had gained twenty-five seats and the Monarchists twelve—the Government losing nearly fifty seats.

"On Election Day I personally visited quite a number of the voting places in Paris, several in what is known as the Revolutionary quarter. I found the polls wholly unguarded by the police and the electors passing before the judges with uncovered heads and in silence. The scene was to me very impressive."

Soon after this occurred the celebrated visit of ex-President Grant and his family to Paris and their splendid entertainment by President MacMahon and the municipal authorities.

It had been manifest for some time that the Third Republic was in a bad way. The crisis came at the beginning of November, when Noyes cabled Secretary Evarts: "Entire French cabinet will resign Tuesday next. President's retirement possible."

In a despatch of the time he observed:

"My own judgment is that a new administration is inevitable. There is great vacillation and no one can see the President's way out of his difficulties. France is restless, anxious and unhappy, torn by contending parties. Business is paralysed, and capitalists are hoarding their means to await the result of present complications."

MacMahon had pledged himself to the conservative and aristocratic element. In vain Pasquier begged the marshal to return to popular government and so save the Republic. In Noyes's view the only course was to adhere squarely to the principle of the irresponsibility of the President. He recalled that Charles X, Louis Philippe and Napoleon III fell because they took sides with their Ministers regardless of the opinion of the country. The American envoy laid his finger unerringly on a major source of the trouble in French politics when he wrote:

"The contest has not been a mere struggle for portfolios. It is not temporary. The enormous movement and complicated machinery of this centralized government has been through generations in the hands of an army of functionaries numbering hundreds of thousands, whose training, social position and monarchical tendencies make them an almost insurmountable obstacle to progress towards real Republicanism."

The new Premier, Dufaure, wanted to get rid of this. M. Waddington was appointed to the Foreign Office, and Noyes

in one despatch pays a tribute to Waddington's "accomplished and beautiful wife," the daughter of Charles King, President of Columbia College, New York, and also, as we may recall, granddaughter of a former American Minister to England.

After much delay, Congress agreed to participate in the forthcoming Exposition, and Governor McCormick of Illinois came to Paris as Commissioner-General. It proved a great success, indeed, "the best exhibition," wrote Noyes (September 20, 1878) "the world has ever seen." The Minister's own part in it had been arduous.

Amongst other events of moment in the course of the next two or three years may be mentioned the genesis of the "Great American Pork Question," as it came to be called, which was destined to tax the patience and energies of so many of Minister Noyes's successors. In February 1881 the French Government, actuated by widely advertised statements concerning trichinosis and mortality among the swine of the country, passed an ordinance prohibiting the importation of American pork. This was a blow to a great and growing American industry. In vain the Washington authorities expressed "profound regret that France had seen fit to promulgate such a decree"—yet it was far too beneficial to the French farmers not to win instant domestic popularity. Thereafter, as we shall see, it became the business of successive American envoys to endeavour to get the objectionable measure rescinded.

Another event was the holding in Paris of an International Monetary Conference to establish internationally the use of gold and silver and securing fixity of relative value between these metals. In this Conference American interests and persons were predominant.

Meanwhile, in the United States, General James Abram Garfield had been elected President. As he was a close personal friend of General Noyes, there would have been no change at the Paris Legation had it not been for the tragedy of the summer of 1881.

Minister Noyes was holiday-making at Dinard when the news came that President Garfield had been struck down by the assassin Jules Guiteau.

The nationality of the assassin only added to Noyes's distress. "We are," he telegraphed to Secretary Blaine (July 25), "overwhelmed by this terrible affair. May God pity the family, help our country and preserve the President's life."

For many weeks the victim hung between life and death. But long before Garfield's death a change in the French Mission was considered inevitable, the Administration wishing to appoint a distinguished New Yorker to the post.

When the eminent banker Levi Parsons Morton reached the Paris Legation in the late summer of 1881 he was in his fifty-seventh year. He found the whole Legation staff exercised over the impending removal from 95 rue de Chaillot to new quarters in a more eligible neighbourhood. It was none too soon, for, as he reported, the old accommodation was deficient; it was reached by two flights of stairs and it was situated over a grocery on one side and a laundry on the other!

One serious drawback existed in connection with the new premises—its name. For some reason or other, which it was difficult to make the French understand, the mention of the Place de la Bitche excited mingled merriment and derision among Morton's compatriots in Paris. Even the State Department, when it read the name at the head of the Minister's note-paper, was shocked. It was evident that something should be done. Morton called on M. Herold, the Prefect of the Seine, and explained the difficulty. The Prefect laughed and declared that there need be none—in future the name of the square would be changed. He consulted his colleagues and the American Minister was informed that thereafter the purlieus should be known to the world as the Place des États-Unis—a graceful compliment to the sister Republic. Under the circumstances, it is a pity that the American Legation could not have remained indefinitely in this pleasant square.

There was in 1881 much pother being made over the visit to Europe of Kalakua, the "King of the Cannibal Islands," otherwise Hawaii, or the Sandwich Islands. He was suspected in America of wishing to dispose of territorial concessions in a country over which the United States were

already contemplating a protectorate. Already Secretary Blaine had instructed General Noyes to keep an eye on Kalakua's proceedings, but his dusky majesty had then only passed through Paris on his way to London. Now, he had returned, and Morton was directed by Blaine's successor, Secretary McLane, to approach the French Foreign Minister, M. de St. Hilaire, and intimate to him that—

"If the King was induced, by interests and influence at variance with those of the United States, to listen to propositions looking to the alienation of a part of the islands, or even to his vacating his throne upon certain conditions and permitting the whole or any part of his kingdom to pass under the domination of some European or Asiatic Power, my Government could not but regard unfavourably any movement, negotiation or discussion aiming at that end."

St. Hilaire promised to warn any private persons against advancing money to the King with the expectation that it would be treated as a lien in any sense upon the territory of the Hawaian Islands, inasmuch as the United States might be compelled to disregard any assumed obligation of this kind.

"You may have noticed [wrote Morton to McLane] the announcement of the visit of the Chargé d'affaires of England (in Lord Lyons' absence), with his suite, in court dress, to the King, to present to his Majesty the order of St. Michael and St. George. There are other indications of a disposition on the part of the English Government to cultivate close relations with the King."

If there was any such disposition it was certainly of very brief duration and was speedily disavowed.

About the same time, too, Morton conveyed a warning concerning Venezuela. France was angry about the conduct of this South American republic, which had refused to pay its debts, and the Quai d'Orsay was threatening forcible measures for their collection. Morton had a lengthy conference with St. Hilaire, who hinted that "the seizure of the Venezuelan customs at La Guayra and Punto Cabello might have to be resorted to." "If so," said Morton significantly, "the United States would assuredly have something to say." The French Government took the hint, and desisted.

Not many weeks later trouble loomed up from another

quarter. A delegation from Madagascar arrived in Paris to air its grievances, accompanied by the American Vice-Consul named Robinson, who seemed to be their chief friend and counsellor. The Government lost patience over the delegation's insolence, and peremptorily ordered the Malagasy flag to be lowered from their hotel. Moreover, the delegates were rather roughly handled by the police. As a result of this treatment the delegation quitted Paris precipitately. When the American Minister spoke of this at the Foreign Office he was told that the Malagasy delegation was simply a piece of impudence.

"*Ce sont des farceurs!* There is someone behind them putting them up to all this. Is it you, M. le Ministre?"

To which Morton replied that his Government "had no interest in the matter but the continuation of peace, that a state of war on the coast of Madagascar would certainly be prejudicial to our commerce, and that I was instructed to express myself in favour of restoration of harmony between France and the Malagasy people. The delegates are going to America—I don't know why." "Perhaps," replied M. Duclerc, with a smile, "it is to induce the United States to declare war against France! If," he added, "America has any real complaint come to me at once, and I will arrange matters."

The new French elections had taken place in September and the danger in which the Republic had stood from the Monarchists and reactionaries seemed to be removed. The Government had secured three hundred and ninety-eight out of five hundred and forty-five seats. Minister Morton sent the news to the stricken President of his own land.

"At this moment [he wrote] the Republic may be said to be consolidated and placed beyond successful attack—ninety years of perplexing experience has developed the democratic idea into a tower of strength. It must be gratifying to the Government and people of the United States that a country which one hundred years ago powerfully contributed to the establishment of our independence has itself adopted the free institutions which have placed us in the foremost rank of nations."

He added:

"It has often been affirmed that France is a country that

requires a personal Government. M. Gambetta will probably take the reins of power."

When the melancholy news arrived of Garfield's death after his long struggle, the utmost sympathy was expressed all over France. Gambetta, Léon Say, Ferry, the descendants of Lafayette and Rochambeau called personally at the Legation, as well as Lord Lyons and the whole Diplomatic Corps. There was a striking funeral service in the largest Protestant Chapel in Paris at the same hour as the service held in Cleveland, Ohio.

To the regret of Minister Morton, his friend Gambetta, who had accepted office, was defeated in the following January, an event which caused the bill repealing the obnoxious American pork embargo, whose passage Gambetta had promised, to be indefinitely postponed. But in the course of the same year the banker-diplomat had better success with another measure. American corporations in France had long been seeking to conduct their business on the same footing as those of other countries. That they now triumphed was " entirely due to Mr. Morton. It is through his personal relations with the Cabinet officers and other legal functionaries that we have succeeded in obtaining a result which this Legation has for many years endeavoured to accomplish."[1]

The strained relations between France and Venezuela, which was taking advantage of the Monroe Doctrine to evade its debts, have been noted. Diplomatic intercourse had been broken off, but, in spite of this, when the Bolivar Centenary approached, the Venezuelans unaccountably thought that France would be pleased at an invitation to participate in their rejoicings. Washington, asked to mediate, wrote to Morton to ascertain if the proposal would be acceptable. He did so, as tactfully as possible. But the explosion which followed is, tradition relates, only hinted at in his despatch.

" I have [he wrote] unofficially approached M. Duclerc in this relation, and I am sorry to report that his language was such that I did not feel authorized to extend the invitation. He said it was not the custom to sit at the table of those who were not your friends. I suggested that the suspension

[1] Despatch of E. G. Brulatour, Chargé d'affaires in Morton's absence, August 1882.

LEVI P. MORTON.
From a portrait by Bonnat.

of diplomatic relations between France and Venezuela was, perhaps, not a sufficient motive for refusing an invitation of this character."

But it was useless to persist, and the elaborately engrossed Venezuelan invitation to France was returned to Washington.

The temporary retirement of the Venezuelan representative in Paris removed a diplomatic colleague who, despite the smallness of his country, actually took precedence over Minister Morton at all official functions, save when alphabetical precedence was resorted to. On such rare occasions Venezuela was at the bottom of the list. That this was a real grievance other American Ministers had previously abundantly demonstrated. Morton resolved to press the grievance home.

"I have [he wrote, January 10, 1883] for a long time contemplated addressing you officially in reference to the inconvenience, and, I may add, humiliation to which the representatives of our country and Government are subject in Europe on account of their titles as Ministers instead of Ambassadors. The Ambassador of the Pope is, without reference to the length of the official residence in France, the head of the Diplomatic Corps, the other Ambassadors, mainly Great Britain, Russia, Turkey, Austria and Italy, ranking in accordance with the date of the presentation of their credentials, the envoys following in the same order."

The Minister then particularizes:

"At the New Year Day's reception the United States Minister was No. 27 in the line, while the Italian Ambassador, who presented his credentials in December 1882, was No. 7.

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs receives the Diplomatic Corps officially every Wednesday at two p.m., when Ministers are received in the order of their arrival at the Department, while Ambassadors are admitted in the order of arrival, without reference to the time Ministers may have been waiting an audience.

"The present Minister of the United States, after waiting from two to five or later, has at length been next in turn for an audience when the Ambassador of Spain or Turkey would enter and pass directly to the presence of the Minister to spend his hour, more or less, the Minister of the United States continuing in waiting

" Diplomatic custom gives Ambassadors the right to call upon the President or Minister of France at any time, while a Minister has to send an official communication requesting a special interview."

Why these anomalies, after Morton's clear and convincing exposition, should have been persisted in, when a stroke of the pen would have removed them, is one of the baffling curiosities of modern diplomacy.

The death of Léon Gambetta, just at the moment and at a period of life when he might have been of the greatest public service, robbed France of a brilliant statesman and America of a genuine friend. Writing to Secretary Freylinghuysen, Morton declared :

" He was, in the most emphatic sense of the word, an admirer of our institutions, a friend of our people, a friend of all Americans, and, I may be permitted to add, a warm personal friend. From the moment when he began to rise to eminence he sought for information touching American affairs and kept himself in close and cordial relation with our representatives in France. He was pleased to see our leading men and no topic of conversation was more attractive to him than the organization of our complex political machinery, the discipline and management of parties and the method and forms of our elections. The harmonious working of our double system of Government was to him a subject of wonder, and no term could express too strongly his approval of the authority given to the Supreme Court to pass judgment upon the constitutionality of the laws. This was a point to which he frequently reverted.

" Before he became President of the Chamber he had intended visiting the United States. Mr. Washburne was to meet and accompany him. How much the visit would have increased his enlightened sympathies for our country ! "

Among the last papers Gambetta had signed were two recommending in warm terms that satisfaction be given to America in relation to the prohibition of American pork and to the disability of American corporations operating in France.

" During his fatal illness the privilege of seeing him was denied to me, but he knew that no one at the Legation was indifferent to his condition, and it so happened that when he

closed his eyes in death the card of the American Minister, the only one on his night-table, reminded him, at this last and solemn hour, that the representative of the country for which his sympathies were so warmly enlisted was not forgetful of his illustrious friend."

Few more cutting rejoinders were ever made by an American Secretary of State to a foreign Government than that forwarded by Hamilton Fish in 1883, through Minister Morton. It arose from the case of a destitute American in a French provincial town. Destitute Americans are, it may be hazarded, somewhat rare in Europe, but here indubitably was a specimen, and the authorities cheerfully wrote off to Paris demanding that the American Government should supply the poor man's needs and furnish him with food and lodging. Morton reported the request to his Government and received a reply (February 15, 1883):

"We have long been occupied in this country [wrote Secretary Fish] in providing for the necessities of the destitute and suffering of European birth who have been made the subject of our pity and charitable care, in great number and at great expense; but *we* have not thought it our right to ask other nations to assume these burdens."

There were, of course, the cases where paupers or persons incapable of supporting themselves, and sent to America by Government or municipal authorities, were refused. But to the millions of starved and straitened Europeans, who looked confidently to an unfailing American bounty, was now opposed one destitute American whom, it seemed, a frigidly calculating Europe was endeavouring ruthlessly to shake off. Such a spectacle could, in America, only cause wonder, mingled with amusement at the ways of Europe.

In the summer of 1883 came trouble between France and Tonkin, which latter country had long been considered by China as a part of her Empire. China was represented in Paris by the Marquis Tseng, a rather crafty and bigoted Celestial whom the French Foreign Office could not be got to take seriously. The Chinese Government thought that it behoved America to intervene, and the Secretary of State therefore wrote to Morton to ascertain if anything could be done. In the American envoy's temporary absence, the

First Secretary Brulatour called on the Foreign Minister. This time it was M. Challemel-Lacour.

"I mentioned [he reported] the Geneva Arbitration precedent as a valuable illustration of the great advantage two powerful Governments could derive from this mode of arranging their differences, and intimated that, if necessary, such a remedy could be again resorted to with as much advantage to the civilized world.

"Challemel-Lacour was very amiable, 'but,' said he, 'first let us make the situation clear. . . . We could not allow our situation in Tonkin, assured by previous treaties, to be in question, and our present action is against the Annam and Tonkin bandits. What is it China wants? What are the points to settle?'"

Later, when the American representative again pressed him, he said:

"'We do not see how such interposition can take place, *as we have no differences at all with China.*' These last words the Minister uttered very emphatically. 'If it is a fact that China is sending, opening or covertly, armed forces to Tonkin there is nothing to arbitrate."

When Brulatour called upon the Chinese Minister, Marquis Tseng, he found that that worthy had a personal grievance against the Quai d'Orsay. His letters had not been answered, and he had been treated rudely. Challemel-Lacour denied any intention of treating Tseng uncivilly, but to his American visitor it was clear that France just then was mounted on a very high horse, and resented any American interference.

Secretary Freylinghuysen telegraphed from Washington:

"China does not oppose French rule in Tonkin, but does not wish to see it extended to her own borders."

Nevertheless, in the French view, China's demands were virtually the abrogation of the Treaty or 1874, the evacuation of Tonkin by the French and the right for herself of occupying Northern Annam. Such a programme was "extravagant and impertinent."

For some time past French troops had been virtually making war on Annam without any authority from the Chamber. Yet when the debate on Tonkin occurred the

Government was amply supported. Tseng protested in vain to Jules Ferry.

"One of the peculiarities of this correspondence [commented Morton] is the plain speaking of the 'Marquis' and his apparently candid criticism of the French acts and statements. On one occasion, Ferry wrote to Tseng:

"'Your statement that "the French have renounced sentiments of honour and justice" is doubtless an error of translation.'

"I fear the Marquis will not appreciate the delicate turn of the remonstrance. He will do it again, surely."

And he did; but nothing China or her envoy could do or say had any effect on French policy or on the progress of French arms in Tonkin. Six months later, America again offered her offices as arbitrator. This time M. Ferry replied coldly:

"France is in a position to obtain satisfaction in China. They are already yielding, and will soon come to our terms. It is time to show the Chinese Government that the French Republic is not to be trifled with." [1]

Whereupon, Secretary Freylinghuysen expostulated in a long cable meant to be shown to M. Ferry. He had written the passage:

"Republics are founded on principles of peace and hold war to be not the first, but the last, remedy for wrongs, or for the refusal of justice."

But on second thoughts the American Secretary of State thought this was too strong, and cabled Morton to strike it out. Sound as the maxim was, it would hardly just then have helped matters. For France undoubtedly was triumphant. China had been chastised for her presumption, and was let off cheaply by paying France in addition a bagatelle of five million francs. It would, therefore, be most imprudent for America to interfere, even to controvert the Marquis Tseng's opinion that America was afraid of France!

Meanwhile, the great American Pork Question knew no slumber. The action of Congress in placing a high duty on foreign works of art had created much indignation in art

[1] Morton to Freylinghuysen, December 4, 1883.

circles, which found expression in the withholding of medals and diplomas to any of the seventy odd American exhibitors at the Paris Salon. Under such circumstances there was little chance of a bill repealing the pork embargo passing the Chamber of Deputies. The attitude of certain American Congressmen was said to be, "If *you* won't take our pork, *we* won't take your pictures." M. Ferry plainly told Minister Morton that the Chamber could not reasonably be expected to admit American pork if the high duty on French works of art continued.

Yet there was at this very time one solitary example of French art upon which no American duty would be levied. This was the stupendous statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World," which the sculptor Bartholdi had finally brought to a conclusion. The labour of taking it down for shipment would occupy three months, but the donors, the Franco-American Union, wished to present the statue to the American Minister on Independence Day (July 4). M. Ferry, anxious to promote good feeling, called at the Legation and informed the Minister that the French Government would send the gift to New York in a State vessel.

The ceremony which duly followed on July 4 was, reported Morton,

"an interesting and imposing one. It took place in the foundry yard of Messrs. Galet and Gauthier, where the monument has been made, and in presence of a large audience of distinguished guests, including MM. de Lesseps, Brisson, Fallières and many officers. In M. Ferry's absence through illness, it was M. de Lesseps who presented 'the eighth wonder of the world' to the representative of the Government and people of the United States."

Before Morton's mission was concluded he made the acquaintance of the then rapidly rising General Boulanger, who made a speech at the annual dinner of the French delegates to the Yorktown celebrations in America in 1881, in which he paid a glowing tribute to America and hoped that every year on January 15, as long as they lived, the company would forgather and toast the American Republic. How soon these meetings lapsed into desuetude!

As a result of a more friendly feeling in France, Minister

Morton hoped that the pork embargo repeal would pass the Chamber before he relinquished his mission; in the end, he had to be content with M. de Freycinet's promise to do his best. On May 14, 1885, he turned over the Legation to his successor. Morton's last act was, as chairman of an American committee, to present Paris with a reduced model of the great Bartholdi statue. It was originally destined for the Place des États-Unis, but was subsequently set up on an island site in the Seine.

The new Minister, Robert Milligan McLane, had been recently Governor of Maryland. He knew France and the French from early boyhood, when he was a student at the Collège de Bourbon, and spoke the language fluently. Born the week following the battle of Waterloo, he had, therefore, all but completed his seventieth year.

"During his college days [wrote one of his friends] he was the welcome guest of Lafayette, the companion-in-arms of his grandfather; and Jules and Ferdinand Lasteyrie, grandsons of Lafayette, were his bosom friends. Young McLane was in the thick of the Revolution of July 29th, 1830, which overthrew Charles X and put Louis Philippe on the throne, the exasperated people having surrounded the Collège de Bourbon and torn down the Royal fleur-de-lis. He accompanied Lafayette to the Hôtel de Ville, where the Duc d'Orleans was received on July 29th, and on the following day to the Palais-Royal, where His Royal Highness was proclaimed Lieutenant-General."[1]

Afterwards, the future Minister graduated at the Military Academy of West Point, studied law, was elected thrice to Congress, and was Minister to Mexico and to China, before his election as Governor of Maryland in 1883.

In 1841 McLane visited Paris a second time, when on his way to examine the Pontine and Tuscan Marshes with a view to improving the Lower Mississippi. He stopped at the Hôtel Sinet in the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, almost opposite the British Embassy. There he was much in the company of Colonel Thorne of New York, "the most noted man of fashion of the time. Thorne and his family lived in the Palace of the King's sister in the Faubourg St. Germain.

[1] Conway: *Footprints of Americans in Paris*.

His turnouts were finer than those of Louis Philippe, and at his château in Normandy his hospitality recalled that of the earls and barons of the glorious times of Queen Elizabeth."

In 1853 McLane passed through Paris on his way to China, and on his return spent several months in Paris. Although graciously received by the Emperor, McLane thought Napoleon III showed an unfriendly political feeling towards the United States.

Still later, on another visit to France in 1863, McLane found Napoleon and his half-brother, the Duc de Morny, engaged in an intrigue to establish an empire in Mexico. McLane seems to have become convinced that the Emperor was no friend to the United States, and said that, had it not been for Lord Clarendon's influence, he would have recognized the Southern Confederacy.

Twenty-two years later, the new Minister to France found the French Royalists still a power in the land. The Comte de Paris "held a miniature Court, distributed money, dispensed favours, supported several newspapers, and paid the election expenses of all monarchical candidates. Nevertheless, they were soon to throw themselves into the arms of General Boulanger." Altogether it will be seen that McLane was uniquely equipped for his post, and was more of the experienced diplomat than almost any of his predecessors.

At the time of McLane's arrival in Paris the lease of the old offices of the Legation in the rue de Chaillot, where Minister Washburne had established them twenty years before, was still held; but being woefully inadequate the premises had been sublet. New ones had to be found, but it was not easy to find them on the meagre $800 per annum which the United States Government allowed its representative for the purpose.

"With our bulky collection of books and archives and with the steady increase of labour, the Legation should have at least four rooms, besides the lodging of the messenger. Mr. Morton, having no rooms to spare in his hotel, gave the messenger a lodging outside.

"One thousand dollars is the least we can expect to pay now for this necessary accommodation, and even at that

[*Wide World Photos.*

ROBERT McLANE.

price it will not be easy to find an office properly located in a decent house."

Comfortable and permanent quarters at length were found in the quarter where the Legation had been situated for many years, at the corner of the Avenue Marceau and the rue Galilée.

There one of McLane's first visitors was a colleague, Mr. Keiley, newly appointed American Minister to Vienna, passing through Paris *en route* to his Legation. One morning, to McLane's surprise, a cablegram arrived from Secretary Bayard requesting him to advise Keiley to await further instructions before proceeding to his post. A little later McLane was able to explain to Keiley:

"Two days after you sailed the Austrian Minister at Washington asked that your departure be delayed. He said your position in Vienna would be difficult, if not impossible, because your wife was a Jew."

The story of Keiley is a curious one in the annals of American diplomacy. Secretary Bayard declared that his Government did not consider religion a disqualification, and the Austrian Government did not positively refuse to receive the American Minister with a Jewish wife; nevertheless, it was found politic to cancel the appointment and send Keiley elsewhere. Italy, it seemed, would not have him, and he finally became American member of the Mixed Tribunal in Egypt.[1]

To a diplomat of McLane's antecedents, the politics of both Europe and Asia—particularly what was known as the Eastern Question—could not fail to have a powerful interest. His despatches are always well-informed and vigorous. In 1885 the revolt against the Turks greatly disturbed the equanimity of the Great Powers. Russia, Germany and Austria demanded a *statu quo ante bellum*, even by force; but such a policy was opposed by England, France and Italy. A conference at Constantinople followed, and for a time matters looked so grave that McLane refused to take any leave. There were also Bulgarian complications. In France serious differences in the Brisson Cabinet arose. There was a dispute between Russia and England, the latter desiring to consolidate

[1] Willis Fletcher Johnson: *America's Foreign Relations*,

the power of Prince Alexander over Roumelia as well as over Bulgaria. McLane in the Legation at Paris had the whole situation at his fingers' ends. Apropos of France he wrote:

"The effort of the Government yesterday, supported by M. Clemenceau, the radical leader, to elect M. Spuller, second Vice-President of the Chamber, failed, the extreme Left uniting with the Conservatives in opposition to him and electing M. Blanc, who had just delivered a very effective address, which commanded the enthusiastic cheers of the entire Republican Party. I was present at the opening, and have rarely witnessed a more enthusiastic reception in a popular Chamber. It showed that great discretion and judgment are necessary to unite the Republican vote." [1]

A week later the Minister reported:

"The Eastern trouble has culminated in an attack on Bulgaria by Servia, the latter encouraged by Austria. I have no doubt that Russia is extremely hostile to this aggression by Servia, although perfectly willing to see the present rule of Bulgaria destroyed.

"France is not disposed to be placed in serious antagonism to Russia upon the Eastern Question. Germany maintains a real reserve of purpose and of intention, and therefore it is not surprising that the Conference at Constantinople is powerless and that the war between Servia and Bulgaria is allowed to continue, without regard to the ultimate consequences."

These ultimate consequences Europe, we may note, was to suffer thirty years later. Meanwhile, the French Cabinet continued weak, and no useful majority in the Chamber was possible. Although M. Grévy was re-elected President in the following month for a further term of seven years, the Panama scandals, already looming on the horizon, were destined to cut short his career.

McLane's first intimation of this latter affair was when De Lesseps started his Panama Lottery in July 1886. Premier Freycinet, whom the American Minister had counted upon to carry through the bill abolishing the pork embargo, fell at the end of the year. McLane had already written to Bayard his opinion that "it is to the influence of the agricultural interests of France rather than to the sanitary considera-

[1] McLane to Bayard, November 11, 1885.

tions involved " that American salted meats were excluded from France. The talk, therefore, about the danger of trichinosis was the sheerest humbug.

A curious illustration of the way in which certain French Republicans of the Left regarded America and American institutions was afforded at this time. A group of Chicago anarchists were tried and sentenced for a despicable crime. Instantly an attempt was made by the Socialists and Communists all over Europe to procure their pardon. Several petitions reached the American Legation from no less a body than the Paris Municipal Council. Amongst the others was one professing to emanate from the Working Men of France, who,

" overcome by anguish at the verdict rendered at Chicago (Illinois) against seven working men condemned to death for having defended the economic interests of the labouring classes of the two worlds, begged the Minister to be kind enough to transmit this petition to the President, the successor of Washington, and to request him to interpose his veto against such an execution.

" We ask this in the name of the venerated memories of Victor Hugo, of Raspail, of Louis Blanc and of all those who have been martyrs of Liberty.

" America, the great and powerful Republic, cannot disgrace herself.

" May this pardon be the bond of union between the great American Republic and that which has given to the world the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the country of Rochambeau, of Lafayette, of all those who, with your great Franklin, prepared the way for a new civilization founded on the rules of law, truth and justice."

The Paris Municipal Council wrote :

" It is with profound emotion that we have seen one American jury pronounce seven sentences of death against men accused of political crimes, and it is with real distress that they have learned of the coming executions. . . .

" French Republicans were envious of the coolness, the courage, the moderation of their American brothers, so masters of themselves, so sure of their power, of their rights, as to spare the conquered chiefs of the Southern Rebellion. Do not tarnish these noble traditions ! "

McLane told M. Longuet, the Secretary of the Council, that he would not refuse to forward their petition.

"I did not, however [he reported to Washington], disguise from him that under our institution, resort to violence in political matters was absolutely unjustifiable, and, to avoid any misunderstanding as to how I felt, I handed him my answer in writing.

"Capital punishment [McLane told the Paris Councillors] is not inflicted in any of the States of the American Union for political offences, and is only prescribed for heinous crimes against their common law, such as murder or rape, committed with malice and premeditation.

"In political matters there exists in the United States, as you well know, since you have recognized it in this petition, a moderation which the most pronounced differences of opinion cannot modify. In the discussion of those great political and social problems which affect the well-being of the working classes we proceed with the largest liberty, and we show a fraternal and tolerant spirit which renders violence inexcusable from whatever source it may come, a violence which can never result in anything but injury to those who resort to it.

"When the majority has spoken everybody submits and force gives place to the law; and if this great and salutary principle of respect for the law, as expressed by the majority, which constitutes the foundation of American institutions, is disregarded, social order founded upon liberty and fraternity is destroyed and society falls into chaos."

It was a clear and reasonable exposition, and carried weight with the judicious; but did not prevent a violent outburst of wrath when the news reached Paris that the death sentence had been carried out.[1]

During 1888 the war-cloud was not far absent from the skies of Europe. Writing in the beginning of the year McLane thought that—

"Bismarck desired peace between Russia and Austria, but there were those who considered war in the East imminent. Such a war could not fail to become a general war,

[1] The same violent anti-American outburst in Paris, and in Europe generally, has lately (1927) been witnessed in the case of the Italian Communists, Sacco and Vanzetti, similarly condemned and executed for their crime.

unless promptly arrested by a revision and renewal of the Berlin Treaty; but to this England, Austria and Italy were opposed."

On a visit to Cannes the American Minister

"met the German Ambassador, Count Münster. He has just returned from San Remo, where the German Crown Prince is passing the winter, and although his visit was supposed to have direct relation to the condition of the Crown Prince's health and the possible necessity of a Regency, in case of the sudden demise of the Emperor, he assured me that such a contingency was not now anticipated, as the improvement in the Crown Prince's health was believed to be substantial.

"In this connection he assured me further that it was the fixed determination of the Emperor to maintain the peace of Europe, and that he had never considered the alliance between Germany and Austria and Italy as having any other object in view; and further, he was satisfied that there was no danger of immediate hostilities between the Central Powers and Russia. If hostilities did occur he thought they would be produced by the distrust of Russia and the strong personal feeling of the Emperor of Russia in regard to the indifference of the Central Powers to the obligations imposed upon them by the Treaty of Berlin."

If certain steps were taken, the Tsar would make an appeal to arms, and Germany knew it. This, it should be remembered, was five years before the Franco-Russian Alliance.

Toward the close of 1888 Minister McLane reports:

"All parties in France at this moment are bewildered by the apparent abdication of the Monarchists and Imperialists and with their determination to throw themselves into the arms of General Boulanger, recognizing him as a Republican and their common chief, trusting to the Constitutional Convention to settle questions at issue.

"This surprising action [in McLane's opinion] entirely relieves General Boulanger from what I considered his greatest embarrassment and weakness. The Comte de Paris himself has consented to this course on the part of his friends."

Nevertheless, Premier Floquet, who regarded Boulanger as "a proposed Dictator quite as hostile to the Republic as the Comte de Paris or Prince Napoleon, was sanguine of his own party's success."

The Floquet Ministry survived until February. Less than a week after its fall, on February 21, 1889, McLane presented his letters of recall to President Carnot. The retiring Minister did not, however, return to America, but chose to pass the rest of his life in Paris. When he died, April 16, 1898, he had nearly completed his eighty-third year.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In 1888 Morton became a candidate for the Vice-Presidency and was elected. In 1895 he was Governor of New York State. He reached the great age of ninety-six, dying on his birthday in 1920.

CHAPTER XIX

REID AND COOLIDGE (1889–93)

FEW journalists in the United States during that memorable half-century when journalists and journalism played such a prominent part in politics, exerted so wide and beneficent an influence, as well as personal charm, as Whitelaw Reid. He had succeeded Horace Greeley in the editorship and control of the New York *Tribune*, the chief national organ of the Republican Party. His tall, handsome, distinguished figure, his cultured speech and writing, and his sane and genial outlook upon public affairs gave him a natural pre-eminence ; his marriage to a wealthy heiress placed him comparatively early in a position of affluence.

On the election of President Harrison in 1888, in which Reid had taken a decisive part, his friends wished him to accept the mission to England. But Reid let it be known that this post could not for grave and solid reasons, connected with the *Tribune's* advocacy of Irish Home Rule, be undertaken by him.[1] The President then wrote that he would regard Reid's acceptance of the French Mission as a great personal favour to himself.

The new Minister sailed with his family for France early in May, arriving in Paris on the 12th. Two days later he was received by M. Spuller, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Tirard Cabinet, and on May 22, 1889, presented his credentials to President Carnot at the Élysée. The time was auspicious, both nations celebrating in 1889 historical anniversaries having unusually sympathetic points of contact, and Reid had a perfect cue for his first official address.

"The United States [he said to M. Carnot] have been

[1] "Some months later," remarks his biographer, Mr. Royal Cortissoz, "when Reid was established in Paris, John Hay suggested that he imitate his predecessor, Benjamin Franklin, by writing his autobiography. This he began, but, unhappily, it was never continued."

celebrating the centennial of their Constitution and of the inauguration of their first President, George Washington. It is my happy fortune to be charged with the duty of representing my Government here at a time when France is commemorating a centennial not less momentous. We never forget that you gave the support which helped to make our Revolution successful. It is a memory which quickens now our sympathetic interest in the magnificent display of the arts of peace with which you crown your anniversary. I am instructed that there is not a shadow of a question in dispute between the two great Republics to cloud the historic friendship which has endured for a century."

The President, in reply, cordially recognized in the coincidence "one more link between the two peoples," and concluded:

"Your task will, therefore, be an easy one, Monsieur le Ministre, and we bid you welcome."

How welcome Reid was he was made to feel in an especially happy manner shortly afterwards, when his speech at the Élysée was quoted in full in the Chamber of Deputies as an illustration of the extent to which the French Government had secured the sympathy and regard of other nations.

"That speech goes straight to the point," declared M. Hebrard, and on every hand Reid met with the same warm appreciation.

"Perhaps I ought to say [he wrote to Secretary Blaine] that in the judgment of the Legation and of the people who have spoken to me about it here, my reception has been unusually cordial. Certainly no imaginable element of prompt and polite attention has been missing. For the first time in the history of the Legation the Presidents of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies have made special appointments to receive me in person at their residences. The President sent to have me brought to his box in a place of public amusement before I had been formally presented, and there are everywhere the most friendly expressions."

The Reids established themselves in the old mansion, at 35 Avenue Hoche, of the Comtesse de Gramont, whose father had formerly been French Consul-General to Egypt.

" The house was full of his collection of antiquities: mummies in their cases, cabinets of bronzes and pottery, statues in black basalt of Isis and Osiris. These sombre objects were promptly placed in retirement, and there was little left visible of Egypt save a couple of marble sphinxes decorating the staircase. The whole interior took on a lighter aspect, which came to be widely known in Paris as it became the scene of constant hospitality." [1]

In the rue Galilée was now the Chancellery where Reid found invaluable aid in his First Secretary, Henry Vignaud, himself now achieving literary renown by his historical researches relating to Christopher Columbus, and Augustus Jay, the Second Secretary.

Before he had left New York he had been warned by John Bigelow, his diplomatic predecessor under the Second Empire, to avoid an excess of zeal and activity.

" You will find," he said, " a little of that kind of business goes a long way. Going into diplomacy is much like experiencing a shipwreck or going into a battle—a very good thing when it is safely over." Reid encountered nothing to justify such a disturbing forecast, but he found plenty of work awaiting him.

" The life here [he told Bigelow] is pleasant but busy. Americans have been swarming here as if Paris were a new Oklahoma, and the President's proclamation had just taken effect."

To his friend, Walter Phelps, who had recently gone to Berlin as commissioner to the Samoan Conference, he wrote in June :

" It is all very nice, assuming that coming to Paris should be considered in the light of a vacation; but I have not yet found out where the vacation comes in."

When he took the French Mission it was with the expectation of remaining in Paris only about a year and a half. His stay was to last for three years, and important treaty negotiations as well as constantly increasing social duties filled in the measure of his time.

Reid first met the leading members of the American colony

[1] Cortissoz: *Life of Whitelaw Reid.*

in Paris within a few weeks of his arrival, when he called a meeting at the Legation to open a fund for the sufferers in the devastating Johnstown floods.

On July 4 he was spokesman for the Americans who had united to present Paris with a reduced replica in bronze of Bartholdi's "Liberty Enlightening the World." The statue was unveiled on the Île des Cygnes, in the middle of the Seine, near the Pont de Grenelle, in the presence of M. Carnot, M. Spuller, and many state and municipal notabilities.

One day one of Whitelaw Reid's compatriots called at the Legation with a singular request.

"He wanted to know [wrote Reid to John Hay] if I could present him to the President of the Republic, giving as his reason simply curiosity to see him; and finally asked me if I thought it would do for him, to go to the front door at Fontainebleau, where the President was then staying, and send in his card. I assured him there was no law against his trying, but he didn't seem to derive courage from my talk. Subsequently his real object in wishing to see the President appeared in a London paper, where, in default of the conference he had hoped to get through my agency, he printed an open letter to the President, advising him that Napoleon Bonaparte is to be materialized within a few months for the space of an hour and a half, during which time he is to address an audience of 10,000 Frenchmen in the Place Vendôme!"

During Reid's first summer naturally the engrossing theme was the great Paris Exposition, for which the Eiffel Tower had been built. In politics there was a temporary lull: the Boulangist movement was dying out, and the elections of the following September were considered a triumph for the Government. The Minister witnessed the election at close quarters. He wrote to his wife (September 22):

"This morning, after a long romp with the children, I took Mr. Ellis with me and drove about the city to see what Paris looked like on an election day. We went to the Boulangist headquarters in our own arrondissement and to various polling places. I went through the lines, took my handful of tickets from the ticket distributors, went to the 'urns,' as they call their ballot-boxes; and in fact did about everything but corrupt the French elections by smuggling a Yankee

ballot into the box. The town seemed to me almost as quiet as on any ordinary day."

And again the next day:

"Last night I spent driving about Paris and trying to find how it compared with New York on the evening of an exciting election. The scenes were very much the same, excepting that they had less disorder and more soldiers. A line of cavalry blocked the way across the Boulevard de l'Opéra, out of the Place, and back of the cavalry was a strong line of infantry. I ran against similar obstructions in two or three similar places—in fact, near all the anti-Government newspaper offices of importance. But the crowds were in the main good-natured and very polite.

"Once or twice, especially on Montmartre, the red, white and blue cockade[1] attracted attention, and the crowd shouted 'Constans!' Even then there was little rudeness, though they jeered the coachman and tried to find the monogram or arms on the door."

It seemed as if the Tirard Government had gained a substantial victory. "Certainly the disappearance of the Monarchists, Imperialists and Boulangists was overwhelming, and *Le Figaro* was busy explaining what the Republicans ought now to do to consolidate their power and better the conditions of France."

During Reid's term as American envoy there were two chief measures which virtually monopolized his attention—the great Pork Question and the Extradition Treaty. The outlook for the first was still not encouraging. The Foreign Minister, Spuller, told Reid frankly that although the Premier held Free Trade ideas, they were not shared by all his colleagues, and the new Chamber was more Protectionist than its predecessor. Yet the Cabinet was very friendly towards America and wished to do its best to remove the obnoxious embargo.

"They all have a kindly feeling [reported the Minister] because of our attitude towards their Exposition, while Europe was boycotting it; and on their success with the Exposition their official lives depend."

He thought that the Government knew how to use, and did

[1] The regulation colours indicating the carriage of the American Minister.

use, its tremendous power in every quarter in France to consolidate its victory.

"The President has steadily grown in popularity and strength since last May. Even some of the Reactionary Monarchists now speak well of him as a respectable man and express their satisfaction that France no longer needs to be ashamed of the Élysée."

Yet the Foreign Minister was obliged to confess that the prospect of any speedy removal of the pork embargo was slight, owing to the attitude of the Chamber.

"He [M. Spuller] is himself warmly in favour of the removal. So far as I can make out there is little, if any, positive unfriendliness to the removal in the Cabinet. But they removed it once, only to have the Chamber immediately restore it. Naturally they do not wish another slip of that kind at present, and, as far as any of them have been willing to express an opinion, it was to the effect that they have less chance with this Chamber than they had with the last.

"If M. Spuller is correct in his opinion as to the probable course of the Chamber, then at present negotiation is not likely to do much good. They have heretofore, however, been a good deal afraid of retaliation. If there should be a strong movement in our Congress towards increasing the duty on wines, and if some of the speeches should advocate that on the same ground on which they base their exclusion of American pork, viz. the unhealthfulness of the product, it might have a good effect. Adulteration of French wines is, of course, notorious. Some documents already furnished Congress by the State Department contain a good deal of interesting evidence about it. Possibly a higher duty on silk might be judiciously proposed at the same time. The moment the French Chamber became convinced that there is a real probability of such legislation they would be deluged with protests and complaints from their constituents. If we could then approach the Government with a suggestion that the best way to avoid the threatened action of Congress would be to show a rational spirit on the subject of pork, and if we could add that prompt and friendly action on this subject might lead to a law admitting French pictures free, there might be a better chance for reaching a satisfactory result than at present.

"The French commercial treaties with Germany and other

countries expire by limitation in about two years. There is obviously a settled purpose not to renew these treaties, but to adopt instead a strong general, protective tariff."

Under the circumstances, therefore, Reid could only play a waiting game. He had good opportunities for keeping himself posted on European affairs and particularly on Germany, where his old friend and journalistic colleague, Walter Phelps, had become American Minister. He grew very intimate with the German Ambassador in Paris, Count Münster, who, like Reid, loved horses and was a famous horse-breeder. The American was accustomed to ride daily. He had, he said, ridden horses all his life, nearly everything in fact that goes on four legs, not forgetting a bucking Arizona bronco ; but the animal that gave him something to do was a Hanoverian steed that he nearly bought from Münster.

" He took the horse out to try it in Paris one morning, and after leaving the Arc de Triomphe it bolted three several times. Reid got the beast into the Bois finally, and rode for an hour or so, but then it bolted again, and this time went like a shot from the Bois to the Étoile, straight through the crowd of fashionable equestrians who were out at eleven o'clock in the morning. The American Minister had for a moment the hair-raising prospect of being held responsible for several deaths, including his own. He concluded that the Hanoverian horse had a mouth." [1]

Amongst his relaxations was, once, a day's shooting as the guest of President Carnot at Rambouillet.

" The German and Danish representatives shot about two to my one, the Bavarian a little more than myself, and some of the rest considerably less. Count Münster, who had stood near me at most of the stands and had been polite enough several times to express his approval of my shooting, confided to me on his way back that it had behoved me to make a fair record, since the other representative of my continent had not. ' In fact,' said he, in a good-humoured burst, ' I don't believe the Mexican shot anything all day, except a beater.' "

In March 1890 came news of dissensions in the Tirard Cabinet and the resignation of Constans, Minister of the Interior. Reid attended the Chamber debate with his friend

[1] Cortissoz : *Whitelaw Reid.*

Münster and was a witness to the insulting reception accorded the Premier. His description is lively enough:

"The climax was reached when M. Paul de Cassagnac, the fiery Bonapartist and hero of so many duels, took the tribune. He denounced the Ministry as the most worthless and impotent with which France had ever been cursed; sneered at M. Tirard as having already abdicated his position and yielded the real authority to speak for the Government to his colleague of twenty-four hours' standing, M. Bourgeois; declared that the new man was the real President of the Council, or rather that there were two Presidents of the Council, one of whom clung to the name while the other one already enjoyed the power, asserted the authority and was recognized by the Chamber. He described the Ministry as having lost its head when Constans went out. The whole speech bristled with the most exasperating sneers of this sort, and strangely enough it was received with howls of delight.

"At last came the vote, and then we had one of those bewildering surprises which make French politics such a fascinating uncertainty even to the close student of them. Count Münster had said to me half a dozen times during the debate, 'The Cabinet will surely fall,' 'This will surely bring it down,' 'It must be defeated on this vote,' etc., etc. Every experienced diplomat around me seemed to have the same view. Only just at the close we began to notice a change and it was whispered that perhaps the Radicals were going to save the Government after all for the sake of protecting their new man, M. Bourgeois. Sure enough, when the vote was counted, it was seen that the Extreme Radicals had not voted at all. The Right had, of course, voted against the Government, and the Moderate Republicans had voted for it. The Government thus had a majority of forty-nine, and poor M. Tirard, after having been flouted and insulted by his own party in a way that would seem impossible in any other Government in the world, was actually kept in office by these same men."

Tirard and Spuller had escaped defeat for the moment, but Reid expected their early overthrow.

"Nobody believes that the Ministry can last very long; and unless a great change comes, the next one will be overwhelmingly Protectionist. It will be friendly enough to us, no doubt, but will do little, if anything, for us about pork.

" Clemenceau watched everything like a hawk, but did not once rise or open his mouth. He had shared most actively in the demonstration against Tirard, and he has predicted the downfall of Spuller."

And this happened very shortly. Tirard made way for Freycinet, and Spuller, as Foreign Minister, was succeeded by Ribot, a moderate who warmly sympathized with American institutions, and, although not over-complaisant, Reid found him a friendly Minister with whom to discuss what Ribot humorously called *l'affaire des petits cochons.*

In his negotiations the American Minister was hampered by the fact of the new McKinley bill and its duties against French wines, and, as one Congressman put it, " other French works of art." Retaliation was threatened. But Reid stuck to his guns and eventually brought Ribot and his colleagues round to his way of thinking, so that by the summer of 1891 the needed measure was drafted and approved by the Chamber. While the Senate hesitated, the German Government, which also had passed a prohibitory law, rushed in to get the credit of being the first to remove the pork embargo. Reid used this alacrity to stimulate instant French action.

" France," he reminded Ribot, " was not accustomed to let Germany lead it, and when the French did a thing it was a national characteristic to do it gracefully."

On December 5, 1891, Reid's triumph came and the pork embargo was lifted at last. Secretary Blaine wrote :

" Accept my congratulations upon the successful conclusion of the pork question. It has been one of the most vexatious subjects that any minister has had to deal with, and you have conducted it wisely from the beginning. You have shown patience, perseverance and great tact at every stage of the negotiation."

Concurrently with his negotiations concerning pork, Reid also secured the adhesion of the French Government to a convention of commercial reciprocity involving certain other staples. In return for the admission of two or three products of French or French-colonial origin, a number of American commodities were listed for admission into France under the minimum duties of a drastic tariff system.

The other treaty, relating to extradition, represented a vast mass of labour extending over two years. The Franco-American Treaty of 1843 contained only the specifications of crime for which extradition was permissible, and a new treaty was drafted in Washington and forwarded to Paris in May 1890. Mr. Cortissoz remarks :

" Reid found that the French civil code and American criminal law, based on the old English law, were very different institutions, and that, with varying definitions of crime in the two, it was a heavy task to harmonize them. The Legation's counsel had his hands full clearing out a dense thicket of technical terms. In Reid's various reports on the negotiations there is nowhere a more concisely expressive passage than this one : ' The discussion for fixing the exact text of the instrument in both languages was elaborate and protracted.' Protracted indeed."

During their three years in Paris the Reids dispensed a lavish hospitality and met all the chief representatives of French society, letters and art.

" At the balls, dinners and receptions which made the hotel in the Avenue Hoche brilliant during the season, letters and the arts exchanged salutations with the *haut monde*. Amongst the leading figures were Dumas *fils*, the Duc de Broglie, the Maréchal Canrobert, Lord Lytton, from the British Embassy, Señor Leon y Castillo, from the Spanish, whom Reid was to meet again over the Peace Treaty of 1898, Essad Pacha, the Turkish Ambassador, Jules Simon and Ernest Renan, John Sargent, and all the leading figures in French politics, Floquet, Tirard, Méline, Constans, Spuller, and so on. Amongst the Americans always present there were often old friends, men like Evarts and Hay, James Gordon Bennett and Thomas Bailey Aldrich. Edison, who went over with his wife for the exhibition, came to know the hospitality of the Avenue Hoche, and in a farewell letter he touches on the secret of the welcome given by the American Minister to his countrymen. He might be incapable of making a speech, says the great inventor of himself, and be obliged at time to seek protection beneath the official wing of the American eagle, but he was not incapable of anchoring his thoughts upon a sheet of paper. He thanked Reid ' for having made me feel so much at home in a foreign country.' At the Legation offices in the rue Galilée and at his own house Reid

[*Wide World Photos.*

WHITELAW REID.

received travelling Americans in an atmosphere which made the general verdict very like Edison's." [1]

It was understood, when Reid accepted the mission, that he would not be able to serve the whole of the customary period. Yet President Harrison accepted his resignation with regret.

As the retiring Minister himself said at the banquet given him on the eve of his return home in 1892 :

" With the Paris Exposition at the beginning, and the Chicago Exposition at the end ; with the McKinley bill and the new French tariff ; with copyright and the duty on works of art ; with pork, reciprocity and extradition, there has not been much leisure."

In the London *Times*, its Paris correspondent, De Blowitz, paid a happy tribute to the American Minister.

" He has," he said, " added to the cleverness of the Americans the urbanity of the French."

Reid's successor, whom President Harrison appointed in the confident hope that he himself would be re-elected in the following November, was a wealthy Bostonian who enjoyed the very desirable distinction of being the grandson of the author of the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson Coolidge was a tall, handsome man of sixty-one, and although fated to spend only a year at the Legation, the journal which he left of his stay there, which was long afterwards published, is so full and intimate as to convey a clearer idea of the duties and distractions of an American Minister in Paris than the memoirs and despatches of many of his predecessors boasting a far longer record of service.

" I had," he tells us, " been in Paris as a boy, a young man in middle age ; and now, when past sixty-one ; and I enjoyed the last residence the most."

Coolidge arrived early in June 1892 and soon afterwards called on M. Ribot, then Foreign Minister, in company with the American First Secretary, Vignaud, whom he describes, as he did nearly every one he met.

" M. Vignaud was a small man of about sixty, who had held the position of First and Second Secretaries for nearly twenty years. He was born in Louisiana, but had resided

[1] Cortissoz.

so long in France that he spoke French much better than English, and was, in appearance and manners, a Frenchman.

"The Count d'Ormesson was at the Hotel of Foreign Affairs to receive me. He held the position called in France the Introducer of Ambassadors, and had to look after all the details of diplomatic receptions. He had since become minister to Denmark."

M. Ribot, who received the American Minister in his private cabinet, was

"a tall, handsome man about fifty-four years old, with light-coloured hair and friendly manners. He was, I believe, originally a professor in some college, and has always been distinguished by oratorical power. He spoke about the Minneapolis Convention. I said that we might know something about it by Thursday, the 9th, but I thought that either Harrison or Blaine would certainly be nominated and elected."

The new Minister was too sanguine; Harrison received the renomination, but it was his democratic opponent Grover Cleveland who was elected. Coolidge continues:

"On my arrival at the hotel I had found an invitation waiting for me from the celebrated Lord Dufferin, the English Ambassador at Paris, to dine on this day. Mrs. Coolidge not being well enough to go out, I asked permission to bring my daughter, Mrs. Sears, and we started together at eight o'clock, the hour named, for the English Embassy. The streets were unusually crowded, and we were delayed, so that we did not arrive until a quarter past eight. This would have been the proper time in America, but I found that in Paris we were expected to arrive at the hour named. We were received in a hall by four or five servants in full livery and knee breeches, but we were not shown into any room where Mrs. Sears could take her things off, or arrange her dress. The footman follows his mistress into the hall, and there takes charge of her cloak and shoes, etc., which he keeps until she comes out. . . . This indicates a very much milder climate than exists with us; for it would be impossible for a lady to take off her things in a hall and have no means of arranging her toilet, if she were wrapped up against snow and cold. The head butler, in evening dress, then took charge of us, conducted us through two large drawing-rooms, and, throwing open the door of another, announced the Minister of the

United States and Mrs. Sears. We found that we were the last people, and that about forty persons in full dress were standing about the room."

The French, as Minister Coolidge found, were very particular about all questions of etiquette and " rank at table is guided by the decisions of the Congress of Vienna."

" The Nuncio holds the first place, and always sits on the right of the hostess ; after him the ambassadors, taking rank in accordance with the time in which they have been in the country ; after the ambassadors, the ministers in the same order. Now, as the American Government chooses its ministers every four years, they are always at the bottom of the list ; so that nine ambassadors and twenty to twenty-five ministers outrank them. This makes a rather ridiculous position, for it compels the minister of perhaps the greatest Power on earth to sit below envoys of little Spanish republics or insignificant States. However, as these gentlemen are only invited to great diplomatic dinners, you are not often obliged to submit to a position unworthy of the country."

Minister Coolidge noted that the same precedence took place on the days on which he called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

" For a minister, one door was thrown open, and he waited in the room, sometimes for hours, until the ministers who had arrived before him had got through with their audience ; but if an ambassador arrived, both doors were thrown open, and he was immediately received by the minister, although others might have been waiting for hours. I often spoke to the French about this state of affairs. Their only answer was, that it was our fault in not sending ambassadors, and that, although they regretted it, they could not alter the decision of the Congress of Vienna. I spoke on this matter to Senator Hoar, and other senators, who passed through Paris, and had the gratification to see a bill, signed by the President, authorizing the United States to send ambassadors instead of ministers. My successor, therefore, will take the rank due to the importance of the country he represents."

To Coolidge certainly belongs some of the credit for the change in American diplomatic status which had too long been deferred. Meanwhile, the Minister found suitable quarters at the Montefiore Mansion, in the Avenue Marceau, at the corner of rue Bassano, and near the Legation.

On the occasion of his presentation at the Élysée, in driving into the courtyard :

" I found half a regiment of blue troops drawn up presenting arms, which I acknowledged by taking off my hat. At the bottom of the stairs I was met by an officer in full regimentals, and every ten or twenty steps another one presented himself, until I reached the reception-room. Here we found President Carnot, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and four of five of his staff. I delivered the letters of recall of my predecessor, and also my credentials from the Government, and, with some difficulty, made a speech in French containing the usual commonplace compliments. The President answered me very kindly, referring to my ancestor, Thomas Jefferson, as having occupied the same place in Paris one hundred years before. Afterwards I sat on the sofa between MM. Ribot and Carnot, and succeeded in turning the tables, by pointing out to him that he was a grandson of the great Carnot, but had succeeded, by his own merit, in reaching a much higher eminence than his illustrious ancestor, whereas I had done nothing. The conversation was quite animated and agreeable. Count d'Ormesson brought me back with all honours to the hotel.

" A curious custom exists, which I think must have come from the Middle Ages. On the first presentation the minister sends three hundred francs, the ambassador five hundred to the Household of the President. Has this not taken the place of the ' largesse ' we read of in history as being called for and thrown amongst the crowd when an ambassador made his first solemn entry to the capital to which he was sent ? An amusing account of the immense expense of such an entry is given in Perey's *Life of the Duc de Nivernais*, who was sent as ambassador to Rome by Louis XV, in 1751."

The American Minister received an invitation from the President and Madame Carnot to sit in their tribune at the races for the Grand Prix. His first idea was to accept the invitation, but on learning that his predecessors had not done so, and that it would shock a great many religious people to have their envoy attend races on Sunday, he declined. His own opinion, however, was that this was a mistake, " as I saw nothing wrong in it myself, and as the newspapers published my name as sitting with the President."

He " attended a great reception at the Élysée at which some two thousand people were present. The Government were there in full force, and the wife of the President ; all the best known English and Americans in Paris, and also a great many from the Faubourg. A great many of the most aristocratic families of the Quartier St. Germain will have nothing to do with the Republican Government. They refuse to associate with either the President or the ministers, and are very seldom met on common ground. I was corcially received, as well as my daughter, and introduced to a great many people."

He was struck by the number of American women married to Frenchmen whom he met in France.

" We hear of English marriages, but I was surprised at the number of American women in the Faubourg. They are all beautiful ; most of them rich. They become French immediately, and I cannot tell you how often, and how pleased I was, time after time, on being introduced to a French countess, to hear her little voice say, ' I am from Chicago,' or ' New York.' The French marriages, contrary to the common idea, seem to me generally happy. The mother, in France, stands on a pedestal, and both the husband and the children treat her with that gracious reverence which you see so often in French manners."

In June the Minister conferred with M. Ribot regarding his selection of an arbitrator in the Bering Sea dispute.

" This is very important because the French arbitrator will certainly be chosen chairman, as the conference takes place in Paris ; and although the strict letter of the law is undoubtedly against us, we have equity on our side, and it is very important that a man of large views and not a technical jurist, should be chosen. The controversy, in a few words, is one which amounts to more than a million of dollars a year. The seals are being killed as they go out to find food for their young, to whom they give birth on the Seal Islands in Bering Sea, by poachers, principally from Canada. In a short time they will be exterminated. Now, our contention that the Bering Sea is a closed sea cannot possibly be allowed. Another argument, that the Bering Sea was not included in the Pacific Ocean in the past treaty, is of doubtful strength, and, as these seals are slaughtered a great many miles from the shore, we have really no claim to any protection, unless

it is considered the duty of all civilized nations to prevent harmless and beneficial animals from being ruthlessly exterminated in the open waters. In other words, whether it is not for the common good to class such destruction of property as you would piracy. The Canadians, of course, who are represented by the English, will claim that the seals are not the property of the United States. That contention, however, we can probably meet, as the seals pass half the year on an island belonging to us, to which they return regularly to calve, and upon which they rear their young; and where, if we wished, we could brand them like a herd of oxen."

Mr. Coolidge had not been many weeks at the Legation before "a small but ugly-looking black cloud" appeared upon the diplomatic horizon. The military attaché at the time was Captain Borup of Minnesota; rightly, or wrongly, he was accused of having furnished certain documents to the hated Germans. Borup used to frequent the house of a certain Countess, where higher-class spies or secret service agents of many lands assembled. Minister Coolidge's own account is of great interest.

"A Frenchman, clerk in the Navy Department, had been arrested at the door of the house in which Captain Borup, our military attaché, lived. The wretched man had got some plans of fortifications of Toulon on his person, and he acknowledged having been bribed by Borup to purloin the plans, which he carried to the captain's apartments and left long enough to have them traced. He then put them back in their proper places. I sent for Captain Borup immediately, and cross-questioned him on this matter, when, to my great surprise, he not only acknowledged that he had done it, but seemed to take great pride in it, as if it were an advantage to his department in Washington to have these plans. He was in a state of excitement. Of course it is perfectly useless for us to possess plans of seaboard fortresses in France; for even if war were possible we have not a fleet to cross three thousand miles of ocean and attack a French city."

Some of the French newspapers had already made abusive attacks on the American Government, and the whole thing was most unfortunate. Coolidge decided to go at once to the Foreign Minister, and found M. Ribot very indignantly walking up and down his room.

"He said that this surreptitious procuring of plans of fortifications would be of little consequence if they had been traced for the American Government, but that he had positive information that Borup had given or sold them to the Italian and German Embassies; that the plans which had been seized on Granier had been offered for sale to the Germans, who had declined to buy them, but who had made use of our foolish attaché as a cat's-paw. I acknowledged at once that Borup was guilty of having bribed the clerk to furnish the plans; but I said that, as he was a gentleman, an officer in our army, and besides, a man of considerable means, I did not for one moment believe that he had been guilty of selling the plans to the German or Italian Legation. I told M. Ribot that I would telegraph at once to my department, and request the immediate recall of the attaché; that I was exceedingly sorry for what had happened, and trusted that it would not interfere with the kindly feelings which existed between the two countries."

A despatch was accordingly sent to the Secretary of State, requesting the immediate recall of Captain Borup, and on June 28 the War Department cabled to send him home.

"Borup was requested to leave France immediately and go to England, where his family could join him in a few days, after settling any domestic affairs they might have in Paris. I was afraid that, if he remained in France, personal quarrels and duels might take place between him and any of the French officers whom he might meet."

Borup himself was in a state of violent excitement, and had already talked too much about the affair to newspaper reporters. For a few days the papers heaped the most violent abuse on the United States and the Legation. It was indeed nearly two months before cordial relations between the Government and the American Minister were resumed. Borup duly returned to America, but does not appear to have been blamed by his Government. The French demanded that he should be punished for such a flagrant breach of international hospitality. To this it was replied that nobody in the United States could be punished without a trial, and that Borup would be tried whenever the French Government saw fit to produce evidence of his crime. The French, however, although pressing very

hard that he should be in some way punished, failed to furnish the evidence. The only way in which the French Government could have known of these plans being in the possession of the Germans and Italians was by means of bribery, which they did not care to acknowledge.

Coolidge later wrote a private letter to Secretary Foster, apropos of Borup's case, pointing out the mistake of sending military attachés who are young and zealous, but who cannot find out what they want without adopting improper measures.

A month later, acting on instructions from Washington, Coolidge saw the Foreign Minister, M. Ribot, about choosing a meeting-place for the Bimetallic Conference. "I think," he wrote, "our Government would have preferred Paris, but the soreness which still existed, caused by the conduct of my attaché, Borup, made the French Government object to Paris being used, and finally Brussels was selected."

On Independence Day, as they had not moved into their new quarters, the Coolidges gave a reception at the Hôtel Continental, shaking hands with some six hundred Americans, one of whom, the Minister notes, was a negro.

"It really gave me a great deal of pleasure to see my compatriots. Amongst them were several women who were studying painting or music in the Quartier Latin. These poor girls are generally without means, and devote the best years of their lives to music or painting. I am afraid that nine out of ten do not succeed, and have to find some other occupation on their return to America; but you cannot help admiring their indomitable courage. There are probably five hundred of them in Paris."

The Minister found the new Embassy in the Avenue Marceau very comfortable. House-keeping was "so different from what it is in the United States as to seem almost perfection."

"Everything was managed by a head cook, who bought the food and sent in a menu every day, so that we could have twenty people to dine without any discomfort at a day's notice. The butler hired the servants, and bought everything that was needed in the household, returning his accounts weekly; but I notice that he was always a week or two behindhand."

[*Wide World Photos.*

T. JEFFERSON COOLIDGE.

Mr. Coolidge was not long in discovering the quality of reserve in the upper class. He met Madame de la Rochefoucauld, "a typical representative of the old French noblesse."

"Her manners had the peculiar charm of that nation, and although she must have been a good deal over fifty, she was still handsome. Although knowing a good many Americans, I do not suppose she was intimate with any of them. Indeed, the French, with all their amiability, do not make friends with foreigners. They are wrapped up in their own homes, in their house-keeping and their children, and it is almost impossible to get beyond the mere forms of social intercourse."

The Minister became on friendly terms with the British Ambassador, Lord Dufferin. He was much struck by the deference and admiration which Baron de Courcel of the Foreign Office had for Dufferin. As they had both been engaged in diplomacy for many years, they knew each other well.

"It is useless for us to attempt to stand on even terms in foreign countries, when we send out every four years new men, who know nothing of the diplomatic relations of the countries, and who meet with men whose whole training has been in that one subject. We suffer even more by appointing Consuls, merely as a reward for political work, so that every few years a new man makes his appearance, who has hardly learned his business when he is turned out for another; whereas, the English, the French, and particularly the German Consuls are men thoroughly trained, of long experience, and who understand the business relations of their country."

Mindful of the shortcomings of some of his predecessors, Coolidge did his best to master French, but, he confesses:

"The more I try to converse in French, and to study the language, the more difficult it becomes. A few months suffice to learn to understand and to speak French; but to do it well is so difficult that I think I have never known more than one or two foreigners succeed. The turning of the sentences and the nuances of meaning of various words and expressions are indefinite. The mere ending of a letter is a

work of art. My Secretary, Mr. Vignaud, knew exactly how to end a diplomatic letter, but had no idea of the proper expressions in a social line. I recollect, when I received a line from Madame Carnot offering me a box at the theatre, I applied to half a dozen authorities to know how I should sign myself, but not one of them could tell me."

Towards the close of the year the Panama scandal burst upon the world. Clemenceau,[1] "the notorious Radical and editor of a paper called *La Justice*. Baron Reinach (whose body had been dug up, and whose autopsy proved poison by atropine, notwithstanding the denials of the Cabinet), and C. Herz, a German Jew speculator, who has fled to England, were, it appears, all together the last afternoon of Reinach's life."

The beginning of the Panama affair dates back to 1885. In that year the engineer M. de Lesseps asked the authority of the Government to issue lottery bonds, and in a letter to the Minister he uttered several false statements. He declared there had been four hundred and seventy-one millions spent in works, whereas only one hundred and seventy-five millions had so far been used, and announced to the Chamber of Commerce that in three years everything would be finished. In point of fact, the engineer Rousseau, who had been sent out by the Government to the Isthmus, reported that, on account of the nature of the ground, a level canal was impossible. Of this the Company was fully aware. It knew also, by reports of its own engineers, Royer and Gacquier, that one thousand millions of francs would be required and fifteen to twenty years to finish the work. In the meantime De Lesseps was using the press. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* received twenty thousand francs for a single article. Small subscriptions were solicited through the *Bulletin de Panama*. "It is the small people," said this newspaper, "those who place their savings in stockings,

[1] "A little later Coolidge made the acquaintance of Clemenceau, dining with him at Madame d'Aunay's, and going afterwards to the Vaudeville theatre. He describes him as "a small man of about fifty-five, with white hair and a black moustache; quick in his movements, and full of wit, generally tinged with gall. He edits a paper called *La Justice*, but has lost a good deal of his power by his intimacy with Cornelius Herz. His enemies think that he can never again recover his influence. He says that the Government, and especially Ribot, cannot last another week."

who built the Canal of Suez, and it is they who are now building the Panama Canal." In 1887 the Company had two hundred and twenty-seven millions left. It had spent six hundred millions, and nobody could predict when the work would be finished. More money was still needed. M. de Lesseps returned in 1887 to his lottery scheme and informed the public that M. Eiffel had taken charge of the locks which were to be built, and that he, De Lesseps, required only six hundred millions more, by public subscription.

It appeared that the American Dredging Company had received sixty-nine millions and ten millions of indemnity. The Syndicate Jacob received sixteen millions, and an indemnity of eight hundred thousand, on which they realized a profit of 50 per cent. Four or five other companies made enormous profits, but those realized by Eiffel caused stupefaction. Levi Crémieux, Baron Reinach, and Oderndoerffer pocketed a large part of the funds used for the press, they figuring as men of letters. The stockholders and holders of the bonds were never told of these facts. It was now estimated that it would require nine hundred millions more and eight years to finish the canal, and the traffic yearly through the canal was not estimated at more than sixty millions. One thousand five hundred millions had been taken out of the savings of the people for an enterprise which a deputy characterized as "the greatest fraud of the century."

On December 20 occurred the arrest of many leading personages on the charge of bribery.

"The only two of the accused [wrote Coolidge] that I knew personally were Rouvier and Roche. I think the country is in such a state of disturbance that a bold and able man, belonging either to the Orleans dynasty or that of Napoleon, could attempt, with some degree of success, to overthrow the Republic. At any rate, he could bring on bloodshed and civil war. The majority of the French are strong Republicans, but they are horrified and disgusted at the venality of the men who have governed them, and at the weakness of the authorities. The French require a strong hand. Of all the leading men, Carnot alone seems to be spotless; no one having dared, as yet, to assail him.

"M. Floquet, the Speaker of the House, and one of the

most probable aspirants to the presidency after Carnot, confessed to having taken six hundred and fifty thousand francs from the Panama treasury for the purpose, as he says, of subsidizing the Republican papers."

Towards the middle of January the Minister reports that the Panama scandal "grows worse and worse."

"Freycinet is said to have received fifteen hundred thousand francs, Floquet six hundred and fifty thousand, Eiffel stole, and even De Lesseps went on puffing the affair, and inducing people to subscribe, when he knew that it was utterly worthless. A large set of financiers, newspapers, and many of the Government are utterly disgraced. . . .

"The newspapers have stated that one of the Ambassadors received five hundred thousand francs. This is no doubt false, but Blowitz, the *Times* correspondent, tells me that the reason why Mohrenheim is suspected of having the money is because he is always short. He says that Mohrenheim accused Lord Dufferin, in *Le Petit Journal*, of buying up newspapers, and that he deserves all he gets."

It was from this same Baron Mohrenheim that the American Minister had met with the only rudeness he suffered during his brief but exciting mission. Wishing to have some conversation with the Russian Ambassador about the Bering Sea controversy, he drove to his house, and was told that his Excellency was at home. He went into the hall, and sent in the name of the Minister of the United States. After being kept waiting for three or four minutes, he heard some voices in the drawing-room, and the footman came back and said that Baron Mohrenheim regretted that he could not receive the American Minister as he had company.

"This is the first piece of downright insolence I have met in Europe. He was treating the representative of a Power as great as his own as if he were a private individual, and of no importance. I spoke to one or two diplomats about it, and found that they took the same view as I did. I then told Mr. Vignaud to call on Count d'Ormesson and mention the matter to him, so that the Russian Ambassador might excuse himself, if he saw fit, by saying that he did not know that it was the American Minister. Mohrenheim, however, acknowledged that he knew it was the Minister

of the United States, but treated the matter with great indifference. He said that he would like to call upon me that day, but could not do so, because he was occupied with his mail. He would, however, leave a card in a few days. I considered that the dignity of the American nation ought to make me require an apology, but, at the same time, it was very undesirable to have any difficulty with the Russian Government at the time when the Bering Sea controversy was going on, and their interest and our own were the same. I concluded, therefore, to pay no more attention to the matter, but simply to have nothing further to do with the Russian Legation until they had offered a proper explanation. Mohrenheim would never have treated an Ambassador in so cavalier a manner."

Coolidge, in a very able memorandum, pressed upon the Secretary of State an immediate change to ambassadorial status. But it was pointed out that America could not act unless France intimated that the change would be agreeable to her. Just now, the statesmen to be consulted, Ribot and Develle, were otherwise occupied. "When men are fighting for their lives," was Coolidge's comment, "they do not think much of the little troubles of their neighbours."

Nevertheless, on March 16 he had a long conversation at the Foreign Office on the subject, and told Count d'Ormesson that England was about to send an Ambassador to Washington, and if so he would be the head of the diplomatic body there. He suggested that the French Government should take similar action, and eventually they did so.

It cannot be said that America was as popular in Paris during Minister Coolidge's term as could have been wished. There was, to begin with, the Borup case ; then came the excitement of Panama and the belief that Americans, having secured their own share of the plunder, were quite content to see the failure of the French project. At all events, the Paris press was frequently unkind and sometimes brutal. Once (March 19) the *Gaulois* came out with an article from the *Libre Parole* of a most insulting character on Madame Ribot.

"It intimates that it is due to her hatred of the grace and charm of Frenchwomen that this Yankee woman laid

a plot to disgrace Madame Cottu. With a free press, I do not see how you can ever prevent such infamous falsehoods ; but it must have a tendency, as it has in the United States, to keep many intellectual and refined people from touching politics. We went at once and left our cards on Madame Ribot. Then, some weeks later, the newspapers announced that the American spy, Captain Borup, had been appointed to an important post at the Chicago World's Fair, to assist in receiving foreigners. This they considered an insult to the French nation. They interviewed me about the matter, of which I had not heard, and the truth of which I doubted, and they then went on to say that I attributed the story to the German and English Embassies, who were always trying to make mischief. On seeing these statements in the newspapers, I felt obliged to write to Count Münster and Lord Dufferin, branding the statement as a falsehood. They both answered that they had seen the charge attributed to me in the newspapers, but had placed no confidence in the statement."

Nevertheless, the French Government threatened to withdraw its exhibit at Chicago if Borup's services were retained. There was nothing for it but to dismiss him. He continued in the Army and eventually closed his military career as a colonel in Cuba during the Spanish-American War.

Two days before his mission ended (May 10) Minister Coolidge attended a sitting of the Bering Sea Tribunal, "to hear Sir Charles Russell pitch into the Americans, whose arguments he described as mere cant, their only desire being to monopolize the sealskins, and sell them at a large profit. He has evidently been a jury lawyer."

It was unfortunate that the Irish advocate's anti-American philippics should have received the hearty approval of a section of the Boulevard press.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Whitelaw Reid, after being a candidate for the Vice-Presidency, was sent as Ambassador to England in 1907, dying there, amidst widespread regret, suddenly in 1912.

Six years after his retirement as Minister, Coolidge was appointed a member of the Canadian-American Joint High Commission of 1899. He survived until 1920.

CHAPTER XX

EUSTIS AND PORTER (1893—1905)

SHORTLY after President Cleveland's second inauguration, in March 1893, he sent in to the Senate the name of James Biddle Eustis of Louisiana as Minister to France.

This appointment caused in one quarter a great personal disappointment, for the aged ex-Minister, Mr. McLane, who had since been residing in Paris, confidently expected it for himself. "He seemed to think," wrote Jefferson Coolidge, when he called upon him, "that the President had intimated to him that he should have the place."[1]

Yet Eustis, in Coolidge's opinion, was an excellent choice. "He is an ex-Senator from Louisiana, an uncle of Lydia Eustis, Mrs. Keenan and Mrs. Du Bos, who are all really French, and who can assist him in making the Legation agreeable and distinguished."

We have already glimpsed Eustis, when he was secretary to the Confederate emissary to Paris, John Slidell, some twenty years before. He was now to be the first to bear the title of American Ambassador, a change so long urged upon the Washington Government. A week after his arrival he was presented to President Carnot, and in the course of his address said:

"In my Government's intention this change [of rank] has been a further mark of its friendly disposition towards the French Republic. Reflecting the sentiments of the nation, the illustrious citizen who is the chief of the executive power of the American Republic wishes that the amicable relations which have existed since so long between our respective Governments should be not only maintained but even reinforced.

"Being born in a part of my country that France has

[1] "He says I must not deliver my letters of recall until Eustis has arrived in France and advises me to stay here and receive him, and says that I can go as soon as the French President has received Mr. Eustis officially."—Coolidge, *Diary*.

formerly possessed and that the French have colonized, I consider that I am not entirely a stranger to your language, your history and your traditions, as well as your marvellous civilization."

At first sight it seems to us—and doubtless it so seemed to the bulk of visiting Americans at the time that the State of Louisiana had been rather more than adequately represented at the American Embassy; for although Brulatour had departed, Vignaud, the First Secretary, still remained, and besides Newton Eustis, the Ambassador's son, there came Colonel Bailly-Blanchard, who also hailed from New Orleans. One of the ablest of the staff, the Second Secretary, Augustus Jay, to the regret of all who know him, received from the Democratic Secretary of State a summary dismissal. "This," wrote Coolidge, when he heard of it, "is Cleveland's Civil Service with a vengeance! and I think the Democrats mean to make a clean sweep of every place without regard to merit."

It soon transpired that Vignaud also had been dismissed, but he was forthwith reinstated at the Ambassador's earnest representation to the President that he could not carry on his duties without him.

And indeed Vignaud was an invaluable First Secretary and so continued for the next fifteen years. It was, therefore, unfortunate that so soon after his reinstatement an incident should have occurred which provoked a rebuke from Washington.

At every Legation and Embassy there is always carefully preserved a secret volume known as the "holocryptic code and vocabulary." It is in the custody of the First Secretary and is known only to himself and the Ambassador. Vignaud kept the book at the back of a drawer in his desk. Rarely was it ever required for communication with the Secretary of State. It had only been used once by Whitelaw Reid and once by Coolidge. One morning there arrived from Washington a demand for a report on the state of the holocryptic code, whereupon the discovery was made that the volume was missing from its accustomed place. The whole premises were ransacked, but to no purpose. The code had been stolen. Moreover, it should properly have been in the safe, and not in Vignaud's desk. Ambassador Eustis was

obliged to confess that the precious code was gone. The Department of State was shocked. Eustis wrote that his mortified First Secretary took the whole blame on himself. His responsibility was admitted, and his chief could only plead Vignaud's nineteen years of faithful service in mitigation of his offence.

What had happened to the code? It was never known. However, the thief's further advantage was frustrated, although it involved a complete change of cypher in all American Embassies and Legations.

About this time M. Krantz, the French Commissioner to the Chicago World's Fair, became dissatisfied with the system of awards adopted there and returned home in high dudgeon. Whereupon France and fifteen other nations officially protested and withdrew their exhibits. Secretary Gresham ordered an investigation, the system was altered and Eustis was cabled to induce France to reconsider her action. But that action had been taken at the request of the French exhibitors, who appeared determined to remain *hors concours*. The whole episode was regrettable, and could have been avoided if the procedure had been carefully discussed and understood in the first place. It led to a good deal of ill-feeling, which, as usual, found bitter expression in certain anti-American newspapers.

President Carnot's assassination at Lyons in June 1894 furnished a timely occasion for the expression of American sympathy and good-will. A meeting of Americans was held in Paris, at which one of the speakers, Colonel Stuart Taylor, allowed his indignation to lead him into an approval of lynch law.

"The question naturally arises [he said] on an occasion like this—How far is this state of things to go? How many more rulers of the earth are to be struck at before the nations unite to do all in their power to stop these foul butcheries? One almost hopes that if another of these terrible outrages occurs the *public fury will take the angel form of Justice*."

No wonder the Ambassador thought this "rather strong." But even such uncompromising American reprobation of assassination did not quite allay the anti-American unfriendliness which was manifested in France in various quarters during President Cleveland's administration. In February

1895 a French order was passed forbidding the importation of American cattle. The Paris Embassy was cabled for an explanation of this "unfriendly, needless and surprising" step. M. Hanotaux endeavoured to excuse French action on the ground that Germany and Belgium had done the same thing first.

"I replied," reports Vignaud, "that there was no reason why, if Germany had given us a kick, France should give us one too!"

But the cattle embargo met with popular approval and it certainly looked as if it had come to stay. Vignaud himself wrote:

"I saw a large importer of American cattle who admitted that the animals are always in an unhealthy condition upon arrival on this side."

This seemed to justify the measure and Hanotaux, the Foreign Minister, told Eustis that Cleveland's protest was a little "fiery."

"I replied that Mr. Cleveland always carefully weighed his words and that it was impossible to misinterpret his language."

Hanotaux did not seem to accept it as impeaching the good faith of the French Government—which perhaps was fortunate at the moment. For just then Secretary Gresham died and his successor, Richard Olney, had his hands full of thorny international problems. One of the thorniest and most annoying was that known as the Waller case. Waller was the American Consul at Tamatave in Madagascar, over which the French were bent on establishing a protectorate. They had a garrison at Tamatave and the insurgent Hovas one at Farfute. Waller thereupon began a correspondence with the enemy, describing conditions at Tamatave, stating that crime and disease were rife there, that one hundred French soldiers were in hospital, that scarcity of food existed and other statements calculated to encourage the rebels. The letters were opened and Consul Waller was seized, tried and condemned to twenty years' confinement in a French prison.[1]

[1] The internecine troubles ended in June 1896 by France's annexing Madagascar. "For the organization of the new order of things," M. Hanotaux told Eustis, "the French Republic will be governed, with regard to American citizens, by the sympathies which unite the two countries"—which, however, it must be confessed, were not, at the moment, of a robust character.

[*Wide World Photos.*

J. B. EUSTIS.

The event made a great stir; Waller's friends got the ear of President Cleveland and did their best to embroil the two countries. It was charged that there had been legal irregularities at the trial, and Waller's release was loudly demanded. Olney cabled (December 7, 1895):

"Are not defects in composition of court and other irregularities indicated? Also claim that judgment and sentence were always void and can now be so treated by the United States in our issue with France? If Waller has lost his rights by delay it is through the neglect and unskilfulness of counsel appointed by France and therefore justly imputable to France and not to Waller. We ought to demand Waller's release."

The Ambassador, however, was not greatly impressed by the foregoing arguments. At first, he had thought that Waller was convicted on insufficient evidence, but after getting access to the documents and weighing all the testimony he reported that he personally had "no doubt whatever of his guilt. It was a deliberate attempt to give information to the enemy to the prejudice of the military situation in France."

Yet, as evidence of good-will, the French Government offered to pardon the offender, which was surely a sufficient concession, without asking that he be retried, the judgment reversed and the man compensated. In his despatch, Eustis was moved to remark:

"Our Government has done everything in its power. It has obtained the needed evidence and it secures the pardon of a guilty man."

It was certainly doing a great deal, as Olney eventually admitted; but in the course of the affair he had not been very complimentary towards what he thought the Ambassador's lukewarmness and delay. Eustis thought he was being censured and took umbrage, but the Secretary of State assured him that he had intended no censure. He added, sagely:

"Please bear in mind, nevertheless, that in this as in every other case attracting much public attention, the Department suffers not only if the right thing is not done but also if the Department is not advised and thus enabled to show that it has been done."

There happened another awkward incident which provoked heartburnings. We have noted a humorous reference to French wines as among French " works of art " ; but one hardly expected that the American Consul at Bordeaux would seriously have been moved to impugn the purity of this great staple of French export. Yet in the autumn of 1895 he issued a report on wine-making in France in which he boldly declared that " most of the wine produced has no grape-juice whatever, and the French Government has recently destroyed 15,000 casks of wine found to contain no grape-juice, but to be made of water, alcohol, sulphate of gypsum, glycerine, salt of potash and berries for colouring." The report was copied with great glee into the American press and gradually found its way back to Bordeaux, where it created a tempest of indignation. The Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce protested to the Government, which in turn asked for an explanation of these astounding aspersions from the American Ambassador. Eustis wrote to the Consul, who was very evasive and sought support for his charges from the Vice-Consul at Marseilles. M. Hanotaux demanded that both should be officially rebuked for their grave reflections upon the French wine industry ; but they took refuge in quotations from authentic French analytical reports, and the correspondence finally lapsed, leaving the impression that stronger measures against adulteration would not be a bad thing for the industry, and also that the Americans, for a non-wine-drinking people, were rather particular.

Ambassador Eustis was no more satisfied than his predecessors had been with the material conditions surrounding the Paris Embassy.

" The offices," he reported, " are in every way objectionable. There is not sufficient room and we are able to secure them at a low rent only because the drainage is bad and some of the rooms are small and badly lighted." The money appropriation was quite insufficient. " I deem it my duty to call the attention of the Senate Committee of Foreign Affairs to the inadequate allowance under existing law to defray the expenses of this Embassy. Instead of $4,000, the amount should be at least $6,000. The clerical work performed was at least ten times more than is represented by our despatches."

On the eve of giving up the mission (President McKinley had assumed power in March), Eustis wrote Secretary John Sherman about the prospective change of Chancellery offices, which were "poor and shabby,'" saying that the furniture was "not worth moving. But," he added, "as General Porter is arriving next month the matter will doubtless receive his attention."

Ambassador Eustis presented his letter of recall on May 24, 1897.

When General Horace Porter came to Paris in the spring of 1897 he was preceded by his reputation as a graceful and witty after-dinner speaker and an agreeable man of the world. He could boast of many friendships, and his tastes, private means and manner of life would hardly render him tolerant of second-rate company and surroundings—of what he called the shabby-genteel.

Porter, who was now sixty, had been what the French call *un officier par carrière*: he had received his military education at West Point; as a captain of twenty-five he had been wounded in battle, and later was promoted lieutenant-colonel and served on the staff of General Grant. When Grant became President he appointed Porter his private secretary. Subsequently he entered the railway world and rose to considerable affluence.

On reaching Paris as the diplomatic representative of his country he learnt of the fatal conflagration at the Bazar de la Charité, in which so many of rank and fashion lost their lives.

"I have [he wrote, in his first despatch] been deeply touched since my arrival by the profound grief into which France has been plunged by the appalling loss of life which occurred on May 4 (Bazar de la Charité). The unfortunate catastrophe has cast a gloom on the entire city, and the deepest sympathy is everywhere manifested for the numerous relations and friends of those who perished."

Porter went to the Élysée to present his letter of credence to President Félix Faure, a man after his own heart, florid, genial, of imposing presence and manners.

In the conversation which followed, which was conducted in French,

" The President said many pleasant things in regard to our country and asked numerous questions about President McKinley, as to his methods of distributing his official business, his personal characteristics, etc., and seemed to be particularly interested in his career as an American statesman."

Only a month later an attempt was made to assassinate M. Faure and Porter instantly sent his country's congratulations on the President's escape, learning to his surprise that a similar message had been received from Italy alone. Four years afterwards the American President concerning whom M. Faure had displayed such a keen interest was himself struck down by an assassin.

One of Porter's first acts was to secure new quarters for his Embassy at Number 8, Avenue Kléber. After visiting the Chancellery he agreed with his predecessor. The premises " did not rise to the dignity of the shabby-genteel." In his opinion new furniture, electric lighting and other conveniences were urgently needed. Thousands ought to have been spent, but when he appealed to the aged and failing John Sherman, then Secretary of State, he was told that " in view of the many demands made recently upon the Department only $1,000 can be allowed."

It was the old story—if any Ambassador were fastidious in such matters he himself might make good the deficit!

At that precise moment the State Department appeared more interested in the genealogy of the Lafayette family than in the upholstery of its Paris Chancellery. Much misapprehension, it noted, existed in the United States as to the exact descendants of Washington's friend and companion-in-arms. Accordingly, a complete list of the Lafayette family was prepared at the Embassy. At first sight it looked rather alarming; but an accompanying note reassured the Department:

" None are the offspring of any male descendant of General Lafayette, whose name would have died out after the death of Edward de Lafayette, December 1890, if two members of the family, M. de Pusy and M. de Sahins, had not obtained from the Government the right of adding the glorious name to their own."

It is not a little curious that at the moment this list was being compiled a letter was received at the Embassy from the Vicomte de Rochambeau[1] informing the American representative of the death of his father on September 2.

In 1898 there broke out the Spanish-American War, and General Porter very quickly was made aware on which side the bulk of Latin sympathies lay. Nor, it is to be feared, was a hostile sentiment confined to the Latin nations of Europe, and it became more marked with the progress of the American victories. The Ambassador reported that the French Government was behaving well, but that the Paris press was evincing its enmity. Porter soon learnt that the Spanish Ambassador in Paris, Señor Leon y Castillo, had been instructed by his Government to make peace overtures to his American colleague. But Porter could not listen to such overtures without the express consent of his Government, and succeeded for a time in evading Castillo, who was bent on a meeting. When they met the American forwarded the Spanish request for terms of peace. These were stated by President McKinley to the French Minister in Washington on July 30 and on August 12 the Peace Protocol suspending hostilities was signed. Commissioners on both sides were appointed to meet in Paris and negotiate a treaty of peace. W. R. Day, lately Secretary of State, ex-Ambassador Whitelaw Reid, and Senators Davis and Gray duly arrived and the sittings began on October 1.

"A few days after the hottest of the meetings on this subject Ambassador Porter gave a dinner to all the commissioners. Montero Rios talked with Reid about everything under the sun, including Velasquez, but he couldn't keep away from the condition of Spain, the necessity for peace, and, above all, the necessity for means of internal development. The whole tone of his talk indicated a readiness to be rid of the colonies, but a feeling that they ought to get money enough for them to be able to prosecute improvements at home. Castillo in his turn renewed his argument on the call for magnanimity to a fallen nation, pointing out that such magnanimity should take the form of recognition of the Cuban debt. He declared that a large part of this debt had been incurred for purposes

[1] Vicomte de Rochambeau had been, next to Lafayette, the chief French military hero of the American Revolution.

of internal development in Cuba, railroads and the like, and repeated several times that, speaking unofficially, and as one old friend to another, on his word of honour, if he were in the place of the United States he would gladly take the Cuban debt—otherwise we should surely have trouble with the Cubans ; on the other hand, if we assumed the debt, we had absolute control of Cuba in the eyes of the world. Reid told him there was not the remotest possibility of our doing it." [1]

While the wrangling went on at the Peace Conference, just then, from other causes, Paris and France were suffering a great moral strain. There were two national crises in the year 1898—those connected with Captain Dreyfus and Fashoda.

As the Ambassador's daughter testifies :

" A topic far more absorbing than the Spanish War was the Dreyfus case. Every one took sides : Dreyfus was either a saint and martyr, or the most abominable rascal on the face of the earth. If you happened to be seated between two gentlemen of the opposing parties, you heard some lively conversation. I ate my dinner, but I cannot say as much for my two neighbours." [2]

It was also a period of increasing Anarchism and Communism in French politics, threatening the stability of the Republic.

For two months the Peace negotiations went on.

The attitude of the Spaniards when the Americans presented their proposal on the Philippines, demanding the cession of the entire archipelago, was described by Reid as one of " despairing resignation." An adjournment of a few days was agreed upon, a period of anxious waiting. Ribot, at whose house the Reids were dining, expressed the hope that America would not alienate the sympathies of the world by pushing the Spaniards too far. That, it seemed, was to be the official tone, the tone of the " environment."

Outside the Conference the French Press continued unfeignedly hostile. In *Le Gaulois*, *Le Figaro* and *Le Matin* it

[1] Cortissoz : *Life of Whitelaw Reid.*

[2] Elsie Porter Mende : *An American Soldier and Diplomat.*

was confidently predicted that Spain would refuse to sign a treaty surrendering the Philippines.

But the Spanish Government did so at last—on December 10—America agreeing to pay Spain twenty million dollars for the Philippines, and the sky in consequence gradually cleared in Paris. Next year it was the British who came in for French resentment, owing to the Boer War, and Porter's British colleague, Sir Edmund Monson, had to endure the "pin-pricks" and something worse of the Boulevard journalists.

"During his term of service as Ambassador [writes his daughter], General Porter was required to act in many diplomatic situations of great delicacy. The information which he needed for his guidance he obtained through travel and contact with the right men all over Europe. His personal prestige came as the result of unremitting attention to his social duties and opportunities. But the chief element of his great success was the cordial and complete understanding between him and the three men with whom he had principally to deal—Hay, Hanotaux, and Delcassé. When Porter expressed to Ambassador McCormick his belief that in international relations traditions of friendship and the recollection of successful alliances were much more potent than general treaties and the exchange of visits, he was doubtless thinking of the temper in which he and these men had worked shoulder to shoulder."

There was France's attitude towards the Chinese Boxer outbreak in 1900, the siege of the Legations and Secretary Hay's efforts to bring order out of chaos.

"The diplomatists of Europe [wrote Porter to Hay, September 28, 1900] seem to be all at sea regarding the Chinese Question, and the jealousy, suspicion, and want of confidence in one another is increasing. Germany's aggressive action, with an apparent attempt to dominate the situation, awakens distrust."

By far the most dramatic event in the embassy of General Porter was the finding of the body of John Paul Jones.

Although attempts were made at various times to trace the remains of America's first naval hero, and convey them to the United States for burial, its accomplishment was

finally reserved for the zeal and public spirit of Ambassador Porter. Having submitted the project to his Government, and without waiting for the monetary aid from Congress, the Ambassador had elaborate shafts sunk and galleries dug at his own expense, on the site upon which he had secured the privilege of excavation.

It was a matter of historical record that John Paul Jones was buried on July 20, 1792, in Paris, but there was much uncertainty as to the exact spot. Records were carelessly made and kept during the French Revolution; many were lost during the Terror, in the year following the death of John Paul Jones, and most of what survived the Terror perished in the burning of the Paris Hôtel de Ville in 1871.

Fortunately, some patriotic Americans had copied one or two extracts concerning John Paul Jones, and those copies came to furnish the only clues.

"This 20th day of July, 1792, year IV of Liberty and I of Equality, at eight o'clock in the evening in conformity with the decree of the National Assembly of yesterday in the presence of a deputation from the said Assembly, was buried John Paul Jones, native of England, and a citizen of the United States, aged forty-five years, who died the 18th of this month at his residence, situated rue de Tournon, 42, from dropsy of the chest, in the sentiment of the Protestant faith."

Another record mentioned the fact that he was buried in a leaden coffin bearing his name and titles on a brass plate, and that on the corpse was the sword, while by it lay John Paul Jones's papers and certificates. But no document mentioned the place of burial.

After a careful examination of existing evidence, Ambassador Porter came to the conclusion that the cemetery must have been the old Cimetière St.-Louis, reserved to Protestants and having a section reserved for foreign Protestants. But the old St.-Louis Cemetery had gone the way of many old burying-grounds in Paris. It had gradually been filled in, then covered over, then built upon. To-day, the angle of the rue Grange-aux-Belles and the rue des Écluses-Saint-Martin marks the locality. Houses stand on each side, rendering the task of research particularly difficult.

While recommending to Congress an appropriation of a

[*Wide World Photos.*

HORACE PORTER.

maximum sum of $35,000, in case one or several houses would have to be sapped, or at all events to cover the costs of tunnelling, which in themselves would be considerable, Ambassador Porter, who had great difficulty in securing the city's consent to excavations under the street and the further consent of the proprietors of the houses affected, started work at his own expense. He had a first shaft sunk in the rue Grange-aux-Belles, opposite No. 45, and a second one under the shed of a grain-dealer, at No. 43, of the same street, only a few yards from the intersection of the rue des Écluses-Saint-Martin. These two shafts were sunk to a depth of twenty-five feet, in order to make sure that the cemetery was indeed there and that the bones had not been disturbed.

Although tradition had it that the cemetery had never been touched, Ambassador Porter did not want to take any risks.

The work of excavation long continued under General Porter's orders, by the City Contractor, Geminet, aided by other authorities. Congress having delayed voting the appropriations asked for, General Porter decided to continue the disbursements he had begun, in order that the option secured and paid for should not be forfeited. As the buildings torn down were to be rebuilt at once, there was no time to be lost.

Among the coffins eventually found was a leaden casket, the name-plate of which had been torn off, leaving an aperture. The body within was in such a remarkable state of preservation that it had evidently been kept in alcohol—a measure taken only for persons of exceptional importance. The alcohol having evaporated through the aperture in the lead covering, the features had to a certain extent lost their shape. The following facts were, however, considered as established by all the experts called in, who agreed in their opinion:

Cast of features and shape of head: strikingly similar to the rare existing portrait of John Paul Jones.

A fragment of pulmonary matter being found in good preservation and analysed, proved to be affected by the form of tuberculosis of which the admiral died.

The linen in which the corpse was wrapped bore the monogram JP.

Neither sword nor paper was found in the coffin.

The opinion of the experts, on the strength of the above evidence as to the body in the leaden casket, added to documentary evidence as to the place of burial, was that the body was that of John Paul Jones.

It was decided to transfer the body to Annapolis, and a United States warship was sent to receive it. By that time Porter had resigned his post as Ambassador and came very nearly being overlooked in the official ceremonies of transfer, in Paris. At the last moment President Roosevelt appointed General Porter Special Ambassador to act with the Ambassador at the ceremony; the French authorities delivered the body to the new Ambassador, McCormick, who delivered it to Special Ambassador Porter, who delivered it to the United States Naval authorities for transportation to Annapolis.

All expenses up to this point had been borne by General Porter personally, although ultimately Congress made an appropriation of $135,000 for the interment and Annapolis memorial.

When leaving Paris in May 1905, General Porter stated that it was not his intention to present any claim for reimbursement, but that the body of John Paul Jones, recovered on his initiative and at his personal expense, should be his gift to the American nation.[1]

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Ambassador Eustis resumed the practice of law in New York. He was the translator of the *Institutes* of Justinian and Guizot's *History of Civilization.* He died in 1899.

Porter was chosen, with ex-Ambassador Choate, American delegate to the Hague Peace Conference of 1907. Returning to New York, he became President of the Navy League. He died in 1921.

[1] For Porter's own account, "The Recovery of the Body of John Paul Jones," see *Century Magazine,* October 1907.

CHAPTER XXI

McCORMICK, WHITE AND BACON (1905–12)

THE new Ambassador, Robert Sanderson McCormick, was a member of the family which had given the famous reaping machines to the world. He himself, however, had embraced diplomacy, seeking, as one of his compatriots, perhaps irresistibly, put it, to "gather in the harvest sown by statesmanship, reap the golden grains of diplomatic wisdom, and thresh out the problems of international relations."

McCormick, who was now fifty-six, had been Secretary of Legation at London in 1889–92, and later had been Minister to Austria and Russia, experiences which enabled him to take a broad and intelligent view of European questions.

On April 30, 1905, the Ambassador, having previously been presented to M. Delcassé by General Porter, handed in his letters of credence to President Loubet at the Élysée.

"Since more than a century [he said] that this Franco-American alliance has lasted—an alliance which the memories of the services rendered in the cause of liberty have made more solid than if inscribed in treaties—no cloud has troubled the friendly concord of our two nations."

This, though amiable, was rather sweeping and historically, as we have seen in these pages, inaccurate. All the same, McCormick came to France at a propitious moment.

The ceremonies in connection with the transport of the body of the first American naval hero to America facilitated the expression of French good-will towards the sister republic. But other and vaster occasions were fast arising. The Russo-Japanese War had reached a climax. Togo had annihilated the Russian fleet, and, as President Roosevelt wrote: "The Russian case is absolutely hopeless." He would be

sorry to see Russia driven out of East Asia, but it was inevitable if the war continued. "Accordingly, I have urged her to let me propose to both combatants that they meet and negotiate for peace." Germany cordially approved of Roosevelt's plan.

McCormick had a long interview with the Russian Ambassador in Paris, Count Witte. The latter scouted the idea of Russia's paying a cash indemnity to Japan. The American told him frankly that he thought such an attitude foolish.

"To every disinterested observer," he wrote to the President, "this cannot but seem a most fatuous policy, and I cannot but think it will be modified when a commission of the combatants are brought face to face."

On July 1 Secretary Hay died and was succeeded by Elihu Root, who, in addition to Russia and Japan, found the Moroccan situation on his hands and the necessity of helping France and England to curb the activities of the Kaiser.

Yet, as Congressman Loomis, then in Paris, cabled to President Roosevelt:

"There is a wave of enthusiasm in France for the United States, largely due to the influence of your prestige. Congratulations on Root. He has made a splendid impression in international circles here."

Senator Lodge, also in Paris, wrote to his friend Roosevelt (July 8, 1905):

"At McCormick's in the evening I had a long talk with Rouvier, who impresses me as a strong man and who knows the situation. He spoke of you not only in the highest, but, in regard to Morocco, in the warmest terms. Root's nomination was announced while I was talking with him, and he said at once in the most eager way: '*Est-ce qu'il est un ami de la France?*' You know how I have always believed that France was our natural ally and belonged in our system and not with England. The Kaiser has done more in a month to drive her toward us than twenty years of effort. For this reason I want to cultivate and cement the relation, and they will value words of appreciation from you enormously—from you personally as well as officially."

The world was indeed "looking to President Roosevelt

as the one man whose influence can bring about the universally desired peace."

In forwarding the Yellow Book on Morocco, McCormick wrote to Secretary Root (December 15, 1905):

"The action of Germany which led to Delcassé's resignation was not so much against France as through her against England, France being in no position to resist Germany's demands and her Prime Minister being Finance Minister first and Foreign Minister secondarily, with the consequences of a rupture always in the foreground.

"As I am able to inform you, M. Delcassé might have straightened his position by having from Lord Lansdowne in writing the assurance that England would come to the aid of France should she be attacked by Germany.

"My informant said 'Lord Lansdowne not only assured the French Ambassador in London that England would come to the aid of France if attacked by Germany, adding that public opinion would compel the Government to do so, but went further and offered to put this assurance in writing if the French Government desired it; but the offer was not accepted."

How the history of Europe would have been changed if Delcassé had been able to produce such a document!

And now comes a frank revelation of where Ambassador McCormick's own sympathies lay. It may perhaps to some seem strange reading nowadays, but his views were shared by many of his countrymen. He gave it then as his opinion that "war is more probable between England and Germany than between Germany and France.

"Germany [he continues] is France's superior. *The German is the one strong, virile, progressive, thorough people on the Continent*, and William II in the acts which are so loudly condemned abroad is but the impersonation of these qualities —qualities which find their counterpart in Japan, and which find what to them is their natural ground for expansion everywhere forestalled by England—as England finds her commercial supremacy everywhere threatened by Germany. France is only a weight between them now that conditions in Russia makes her alliance with that great Empire of little or no value, and the financial relations which spring from this alliance are one of the most menacing factors in the European situation."

He spoke of the revelations made by *Le Matin* concerning England and Germany, and that newspaper's commentary, "Let them fight; France can turn the scale and profit. It may not be heroic—but the time for the heroic is past. Let us beware of sentiment, like the plague." This, added McCormick, was also the view of many good Frenchmen, including the Prime Minister, M. Rouvier.

France's reluctance to take part in the Conference at Algeciras was finally overcome by President Roosevelt, and America took part in that Conference with a result which was beneficial to all parties.

At this period there were grave domestic conditions in both France and Russia which to the Ambassador looked threatening. In Paris he was distinctly relieved when May Day, 1906, passed without serious outbreak. Yet, as he hastened to tell Secretary Root, this fact

"does not mean that there was no ground for the widespread apprehension, bordering on panic, in some quarters. It means that the time is not ripe for the Socialist and Labour leaders to unite for an outward and physical demonstration of the power which they wield over the Government. Such demonstrations are reserved for the time when the Government halt in its concessions to the Socialist labour demands.

"Those demands, with the Government proposals in connection with them, are touched upon in an address delivered by Sarrien, President of the Council, a few days ago: old age pensions, readjustment of taxation, that the rich may bear a larger proportion of maintaining the State rights of labour; right of Government employés to organize unions. With these demands the law relating to the Separation of the Church and State has had a large influence on the present situation.

"This law has been used by the reactionaries to stir up anti-Government manifestations in districts where the ancient faith maintains its hold among the masses."

The Ambassador commented on the moderation of the Sarrien Ministry in dealing with the recent coal strikes as having done much to keep the peace.

He then went on to make a profound reflection, which has not lost its value to-day.

[*Wide World Photos.*

R. S. McCORMICK.

" In one of my despatches from St. Petersburg, as well as in a personal letter to the Secretary of State, I expressed the view that the attitude of the Press generally outside of Russia, and the English Press in particular, towards that unfortunate country; the exaggerated, not to say false accounts of riotous outbreaks in leading Russian cities was regrettable.

" Sympathy being uniformly with the rioters, encouraging them to extremist measures, it would have its effect on the proletariat of Europe, would encourage the leaders to resort to methods which, if worthy of praise and encouragement in Russia, *might* be resorted to with good effect elsewhere.

" Shortly after my transfer to this post I expressed myself in like terms:

" England, with her army of unemployed, should be careful how she encourages the Socialist and the Revolutionary among her neighbours, no matter what the political relations with these neighbours might be; the masses at home were not immune to Socialistic doctrines, and with hard times might not be adverse to the adoption of Russian methods. "

On the whole, the attitude of the Press towards Russia was lurid, and encouraged revolution.

" Whatever may be said as to the origin and causes of the present movement for a more liberal form of Government in Russia, I have always believed the Emperor would grant needed reform. . . . A word from the outside world to encourage the Emperor would uphold his hand. Who could better speak such a word than President Roosevelt?

" The peace of Europe depends in large part on the successful solution by Russia of the problem which the opening of the Douma will present."

In the matter of the Moroccan settlement, as President Roosevelt wrote to one of McCormick's diplomatic colleagues, he (Roosevelt) had been " most suave and pleasant " with the Kaiser. Yet " when it became necessary at the end I stood him on his head with great decision. . . . As for the Germans, I really treat them much more cavalierly than I do the English, and I am immensely amused at the European theory (which cannot, however, be the theory of the French Government) that I am taken in by the Kaiser."

McCormick had certainly demolished this theory both to

M. Delcassé and to M. Rouvier and his successors after the latter's fall in 1906. In other matters, as time went on, it became more difficult to interpret Theodore Roosevelt clearly on all points to the French.

During this year, saddened by the terrible San Francisco earthquake, Ambassador McCormick took a leading part in the arrangements for celebrating the bi-centenary of his illustrious predecessor, Benjamin Franklin. The chief ceremonies took place at the Trocadéro and were a great success, followed by the unveiling of the imposing statue of Franklin given by Mr. Harjes, the banker, to Paris.

At the close of the year it was announced that Mr. McCormick had resigned his post, and early in 1907 he presented his letters of recall to President Fallières. He was succeeded by one who was even more of a professional diplomat than himself.

It was not without significance that Henry White had headed the American delegation to the recent Algeciras Conference. A Baltimorean by birth, of fine presence and agreeable manners, White had served in the diplomatic service of his country since early manhood. He had begun in the Legation at Vienna in 1883, had been for many years First Secretary at London, and was a familiar and popular figure in English society. Towards his own countrymen his manner sometimes partook, though ever so slightly, of the condescending, and, like many of those English colleagues upon whom he modelled his official behaviour, he was often repelled by the importunities of passing travellers and personal strangers, to gratify whose curiosity or vanity makes such sad inroads on a diplomat's time.

To satisfy all those persons who beset an embassy or legation requires much tact and address. Once in 1892, for example, a newly married American couple arrived in London and requested seat sin the House of Commons gallery for an important Irish debate. White promised to do his best, but quickly discovered that, as the debate was of very great importance indeed, all seats had been allotted weeks before.

The American Minister, Bayard, might have requested

two seats in the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery, but these, too, were allotted. The present applicant, a rising young lawyer, suggested another night, and then White had to explain that for every place available there were at least a dozen applications for weeks to come. But by way of compensation, and to show his good-will, he wrote to the young lawyer saying that he had succeeded in obtaining tickets to inspect the Royal Mews and these were enclosed. The tickets were promptly and indignantly returned, although, had the young couple known it, the privilege of viewing the Queen's horses and State carriages was not easily obtained and was greatly prized.

It only remains to add that the name of the disappointed applicant was William Howard Taft, destined to become President of the United States, and that both he and his wife felt that they had been grossly affronted by the Secretary of Legation. We shall see later what came of their long-cherished resentment.

Not only President Roosevelt, but Secretaries Hay and Root and Senator Cabot Lodge, held White in high esteem. In 1905 he was sent as Ambassador to Italy. To be Ambassador at Paris had long been White's dearest ambition, and accordingly, when that post became available, he was duly nominated, and early in 1907 he presented his letter of credence at the Élysée.

Without detailing here the events of White's embassy, it may be said that he conducted the diplomatic business between the two countries with vigour and trained intelligence and according to a system hitherto unknown in the office. Perhaps the veteran First Secretary, Henry Vignaud, saw his methods and opinions less deferred to than before, but he, like the others, acknowledged the high professional competence of their new chief. When Vignaud retired in February 1909, White paid him a high tribute and did his best to secure for him an adequate pension for his long services.

White always took a line of his own. When, for instance, the remains of Émile Zola were transferred to the Panthéon (June 1908) and all the foreign representatives held aloof from the official ceremony, the American Ambassador boldly

took his place in the cortège, just as Minister Monroe had done in the case of Rousseau more than a century before.

"My official career in France [White wrote eighteen years afterwards] was, I believe, altogether respectable, and, as far as I ever knew to the contrary, entirely acceptable, both to the Government—to the Faubourg St. Germain, with which I maintained friendly relations, and especially to the American Colony, with every member of which I was, so far as I can remember, on the best of terms.

"I also recollect that I was the first Ambassador from this country to France to realize the great assistance which the American Chamber of Commerce could render in the way of advice on technical matters to the Embassy, and I constantly called upon its President and other officials for such counsel and assistance, which they were always ready to place at my disposal.

"I believe I was also the First American Ambassador to France to establish the custom, which has been in existence ever since, of giving a luncheon to the representatives of all other American republics on Washington's Birthday. I always maintained particularly cordial relations with them and endeavoured to make them feel as though we were a joint representative body from this hemisphere, and on more than one occasion, when I was called upon to speak in their behalf and on my own, I used the term 'we, the Ambassador and Ministers from America accredited to this Republic,' etc.

"I remember that the American Chamber of Commerce in Paris presented me with a beautiful piece of silver, accompanied by an address, when I left Paris."[1]

In the summer of 1908 Senator Lodge, who was visiting Paris, wrote to the President (July 29):

"We have lunched with Harry White and go to them at their Château for Sunday. He has done very well, as he has everywhere; I am struck with his sound sense and sane judgment, coupled with entire firmness. He is, moreover, not timid. There are very few men fit to be Secretary of State. No one equal to Root can be found. I have thought that in the present situation Taft perhaps could not do better than take White. Who is there so good?"

The years had rolled on, and Ambassador White's fate

[1] Letter to the author shortly before White's death in 1927.

[*Wide World Photos.*

HENRY WHITE.

would shortly be in the hands of the same Ohio lawyer to whom he had sent tickets to the British Royal Mews instead of to a debate in the House of Commons between Gladstone and Chamberlain. Mr. Taft was elected to the Presidency in the following November, but it was not believed by the Ambassador in Paris or his friends that this would make the slightest difference to his tenure of office. And then one morning, just after Mr. Taft's inauguration, he received a note from the Secretary of State which crumbled all his hopes.

When the news of his recall leaked out, ex-President Roosevelt wrote to Senator Lodge (March 9, 1909):

"I am really concerned at what you tell me about White; Taft not only told you, but told me, that he was to stay in Paris—just as he told me that the Cabinet was to stay; but of course it was on his part an expression of 'present intention,' and he was always at liberty to change his mind. But in such cases it is never pleasant for the individual as to whom the mind is changed."

At the end of the month Lodge wrote:

"Harry White is to go, which is a great loss to the public service. The President made public proffer of the English Embassy to Elliot at the Harvard dinner, but Elliot has declined and I have no idea as to who will now be chosen. He ought to send Bob to London and keep White at Paris; but this admirable arrangement cannot go into effect because the object is to get rid of White."

Up to now none understood the reason for White's recall. For months his influential friends moved heaven and earth to induce the President to reconsider his decision. From the heart of Africa, whither he had gone on a hunting trip, Roosevelt wrote (July 26):

"I am extremely sorry about White. It is a grave misfortune for the public service that he should be removed. If he had to be removed there could be no better man for the place than that Bob Bacon."

But if, as has been said, the President wavered, there was no wavering on the part of one important member of his household. The memory of the unhappy offer of tickets for the Royal Mews still rankled. The most that could be considered was that the Ambassador's tenure should continue

until the end of the year. Meanwhile, it was rumoured that Mr. Robert Bacon, Assistant Secretary of State, had been offered the Embassy. To Roosevelt Lodge wrote (July 31):

"The removal of Harry White continues to be an unhappiness to me. He is a great loss to the service. The articles about him in the French papers have been something quite unheard of. The French Government even went so far as to direct Jusserand to do what he could for his retention. There has also been universal regret expressed in our Press, but when personal feelings are involved there is no use arguing or repeating one's regrets."

White had promised to stay on until the end of the year, but as time went on he changed his mind.

"I have [he wrote (September 21) to Secretary Knox] decided to ask for leave of absence with permission to return to the United States and arrange my departure for the presentation of my letter of recall by my successor, or, if necessary, just before Mr. Bacon arrives and present it myself. I have thought it best in any case to take the Minister of Foreign Affairs into my confidence and to let him know that I am leaving. He and everyone else here have heard it through our compatriots, who come here in such large numbers, announcing my recall, indeed even before the 4th of March last.

"The French are a sentimental people. They considered my appointment by the late President as a particular compliment, and as an act of special friendship on his part toward this country, partly because I am a diplomat *par carrière* which in itself is greatly appreciated, and partly for other reasons of a more personal nature, which I need not go into.

"I understand that there is a considerable feeling in Government as well as in other circles—although naturally no member of the Government has said so to me—that in withdrawing me, especially at the time of the enactment of our new Tariff, which they fear is aimed somewhat at this country, President Taft must either be indifferent to French susceptibilities or less friendly than his predecessor to this country. I therefore deemed it proper to tell the Minister of Foreign Affairs confidentially that I am recalled and leaving before long, explaining that such changes are frequent in our service, and that, if any proof were needed, which I assured him is not the case, of the President's friendship for this country,

it would be found in the selection of Mr. Bacon to succeed me, than whom no better choice could possibly have been made. I expatiated on Mr. Bacon's services, his position at home and especially his personal charm, which will be such a potent factor in making him popular here.

" I quite realize that in fixing so remote a period from the 4th of March as next January for my withdrawal, the President was actuated by considerations of convenience which I appreciate and for which I thanked him at the time ; but I really do not think it desirable that I should remain here until that date."

On the same day White wrote formally to Knox :

" I have the honour to request you to be so good as to grant me leave of absence, with permission to visit the United States during the coming month of October."

It was not, however, until Nov. 5, 1909, that Henry White left Paris, without presenting his letter of recall. His case is so unexampled in the annals of American diplomacy and presents such a curious example of the pitfalls surrounding the rising diplomat that it has been dwelt on here at length.

In White's successor the French Government and people greeted a younger and rather a different type of Ambassador from any of his predecessors. Robert Bacon was essentially a Harvard man, a champion athlete and so handsome that one admiring Frenchwoman publicly and embarrassingly compared him to a Greek god. Moreover, he was rich, and his riches had been gained under the benevolent ægis of Mr. Pierpont Morgan. He and his scores of influential friends had ever been ready to do the handsome, manly and warm-hearted " Bob " Bacon a good turn. In this way he had made a fortune, gone into Congress and had been appointed Assistant Secretary, and for a few weeks had even served as Secretary of State.

No one therefore was surprised when, on President Taft's coming into office, Bacon was spoken of in connection with a foreign mission, and it was soon announced that he had been offered that to France. He took up his duties on New Year's Day 1910, and became instantly popular. He was youthful for his fifty years.

"Mr. Bacon [says his biographer] made an individual and personal appeal to all classes. His love of and participation in sports appealed to their imagination. They liked to see an Ambassador who could play polo or who could ride with the youngest of them in hunting. The French cavalry officer of his day was known as among the best riders of the world, and the French, proud of their own superiority in the field, appreciated the capability of the American representative."[1]

Hardly had the new Ambassador presented his credentials to President Fallières, than he was given an opportunity of rendering service and of showing sympathy to the people of Paris. The Seine had been rising. "The stream was swollen from the mass of waters reaching it above Paris; it was overflowing its banks and flooding the portions of the city in the neighbourhood of the river, ordinarily winding its way peaceably to the Channel, moving with the force and destructiveness of a torrent. The last week of January and the first half of February were trying and dangerous. Paris had had floods before, but the men and women then living had not experienced any of such magnitude, not even that in 1740 during the reign of Louis XV and another under the Consulate."

Bacon went out through the flooded area and saw the damage and suffering which had been caused. He thought his countrymen would be glad to help and accordingly on January 29 he cabled the Secretary of State:

"I succeeded with much difficulty this morning in calling at the Foreign Office, which is practically evacuated on account of the flood. Expressed deep sympathy of United States Government and people for dreadful calamities caused by flood, and asked if it would be perfectly agreeable to French Government to receive contributions in aid of sufferers from American citizens from whom I have received many offers by cable . . . was assured such funds would be gratefully received and should be transmitted through Embassy to French Government."

On the same day the American Chamber of Commerce in Paris called a meeting of all Americans in the city. Bacon

[1] James Brown Scott: *Robert Bacon: His Life and Letters.*

was asked to preside, and in the course of his remarks said that he had been assured that contributions from Americans in all parts of the world would be very gratefully received.

" There are many ways of contributions. The Chamber of Commerce is ready to do anything it can to transmit any subscriptions, however small or large, direct to the Government of France, because it seems most advisable that our contributions should be made through the Government, leaving it for them to decide by what agencies or channels the distribution is to be made."

The Ambassador's action and the spontaneity and promptness with which aid was offered were, we are told, particularly appreciated by the French Government and people at a time when, partly on account of what appeared to be an impending tariff war, public opinion in France seemed to be losing its traditional cordiality towards America. The fund was successful in relieving much distress.

His friend, M. Jusserand, French Ambassador in Washington, wrote to Bacon :

" You did not need any outward circumstance to become at once popular in Paris. But if you had, the inundations were the sort of thing to make you so. We know what you can do in waters [referring humorously to the swimming bouts in the Potomac, with Colonel Roosevelt and his intimates, including the French Ambassador and Mr. Bacon] and you were up to your best mark ! All reports about you and Mrs. Bacon agree, and it is all praise, friendship and sympathy."

In the following April came one of the most diverting and spectacular, as well as the most strenuous events of Bacon's embassy, the visit of his friend ex-President Roosevelt, who had been lion-hunting in Africa. Paris opened its arms to " Teddy," as they quickly learned to call him. He made his home at the Embassy during his stay of a week so crowded with public and private engagements that it would have been fatal to anyone less sturdy and determined than that indomitable statesman and hunter.

Roosevelt himself wrote of this visit :

" From Vienna I went to Paris, where I joined Mrs. Roosevelt at the Bacons'. Bacon, old college friend of mine, was then, and is now (1911) Ambassador to Paris. He and his

wife are dear people, and staying with them is an oasis in a desert of hurry and confusion. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to Paris, but by the end I began to feel jaded. Jusserand had come across the ocean to meet me. We are very fond of him. Frenchmen, thank heavens! do understand a liking for the things in life that are most interesting. . . .

"Besides various formal functions, such as dinner and receptions by the municipal government and the Institute (of which I had been made a member and where, by the way, I genuinely enjoyed myself), I was also given two or three private breakfasts and dinners at which I met Briand, and various other members of the Government and the Opposition, in intimate and informal fashion. These I especially liked. In France I also met a number of men of letters whom I had really wished to see, men like Victor Bérard and de la Gorce and Boutroux. What a charming man a charming Frenchman is!" [1]

In the foregoing the distinguished guest says nothing about his famous address at the Sorbonne, in which he once more straddled his favourite hobby-horse and earnestly advised his French hearers, for the sake of their country's greatness, to have larger families in future—advice of which the press, and especially the section of it devoted to humour and satire, made the most.

Roosevelt went away in a whirlwind, leaving a gap in the Paris season hard to fill. During the summer there occurred a curious anniversary celebration in which the American Ambassador gleefully took part. Four hundred years before in the little French town of St. Dié, then famous for its printing press, a group of scholars and cartographers first bestowed the name of "America" upon the New World which Columbus had discovered. The event itself was perhaps hardly an occasion for special rejoicing, involving as it did a distinct act of injustice to the great Genoan. But names, after all, are important factors, especially when they have been consecrated by time and great achievements. Moreover, the name "America," once denoting a hemisphere, had eventually been delimited to the first and greatest of the Western Republics, whose Ambassador could hardly ignore the nominal origin of his country. St. Dié had

[1] J. B. Bishop: *Theodore Roosevelt and his Time.*

suddenly woke up to pride in the fact and resolved on a tardy celebration, to which Bacon was duly bidden.

It may be that in his speech he rather overdid the significance of the episode and the importance of St. Dié, but occasional orators are prone to yield to temptations of this sort.

" For you of France [he said] this commemoration recalls a brilliant past, of which so many cities in your beautiful country bear witness, a country whose long historic existence has been so rich in memorable events. For us Americans it evokes memory of a peculiarly unique event, and the image of St. Dié, where America received its name, *holds a place in our hearts beside that of Versailles*, where America contracted with France an indissoluble alliance ! " [1]

Ambassador Bacon got on admirably with all his colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps, although it looked at one time as if one, the Russian, would hold aloof. Mrs. Bacon wrote :

" The new Russian Ambassador, who, I hear, looks upon us as enemies (because Americans) has arrived, and last night Mr. Bacon dined with . . . to meet him. . . . But the impression Mr. B. got from Isvolsky's manner was that it would take all our ingenuity to make a friend of *him*."

Yet, as time wore on, Isvolsky became one of Mr. Bacon's closest friends, and no foreign diplomat was a more constant caller at the Embassy or a more frequent guest than the distinguished Russian Ambassador.

So far as diplomacy went there was nothing eventful in the two years of Bacon's embassy. In gatherings of his own countrymen he had the usual amount of speech-making to do, including three addresses on Washington's Birthday, pursuing the same theme without repetition or imitation. On the last occasion, just before his departure, he told the company that the commemoration had become " more than

[1] During the war, and again afterwards, Mr. Bacon visited the stricken little French town which gave the name of America to the world. It was an experience which touched him deeply. The tranquil, peaceful Saint-Dié before the war was wrecked by numerous bombardments, and its people scattered. Mr. Bacon took part in the movement to restore the stricken city, and he became again in the eyes of the French people the personification of friendship between his country and theirs.—J. B. Scott.

a national, more than an American, it is an international fête. Washington is destined forever to remain for all time the type of the Great Citizen, and for all time to serve as an example to our free Republics." He continued:

"To you, my friend and colleagues, who share with me the signal honour of representing America in this great and beautiful France, I thank you in the name of my country and from the bottom of my heart for joining me with such ardour in celebrating the anniversary of the birth of this great man whose memory the United States venerate and love, and will always cherish."

On January 2, 1912, Mr. Bacon sent his resignation in a personal letter to the President. He thus gives his reasons for the step:

"The President and Fellows of Harvard, the Corporation so called, have made me a Fellow, to fill the vacancy in their number caused by the death of Judge Lowell of Boston. This service to my Alma Mater I feel that I cannot decline, besides being naturally very proud to be given the honour of this—our Harvard 'Blue Ribbon.' This appointment is, as you know, one of active service for life, and, as there is much work to be done every week, the Corporation must be in close touch with Cambridge and live within easy reach. For this reason I am obliged most reluctantly to tender my resignation as your Ambassador to France."

To which President Taft replied formally:

"I am glad you have been two years our representative in Paris. I am glad that you have enjoyed it. You have done everything well. I hope and believe that your career at home will be equally successful and useful. I accept your resignation to take effect upon the appointment and qualification of your successor."

But a supplementary private note reveals somewhat more clearly the personal relations between the two men:

"The White House, Washington,
"*February* 8, 1912.

"My Dear Bob,

"I have your note of the 25th January. I have named Myron Herrick as your successor. I think he may wish to

[*Wide World Photos.*

ROBERT BACON.

delay here a little longer than is usual in such cases; but do not feel embarrassed by this. I think you will find that Herrick will be glad to take your house off your hands, especially if you can let him have the furniture for a year. However, you can open correspondence with him at once on the subject and know more definitely than I can tell you what the case is.

"I am sorry to lose you, old man, but you are going into good work. My warm regards to Mrs. Bacon, in which Mrs. Taft joins me."

A farewell reception was given to Mr. Bacon on March 5 by the French group of the Interparliamentary Union for International Arbitration, all members of the French Senate and Chamber of Deputies. Some six or seven hundred guests were present, including Premier Raymond Poincaré, ex-President Loubet, M. Briand, the sculptor Rodin, and other leaders in literature, art, science and politics. Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, as President of the group, welcomed Mr. Bacon. "You are," he said, "our friend," and amid great applause he continued: "You are a friend of France, and in consequence a friend of justice. You have never separated the two words. You, as we, are a believer in the co-operation of the two countries not only in the past but in the future. Our two Sister Republics will not be false to their destiny; they will remain associated to assure the triumph of right in the world."

Bacon's response was:

"The title of friend of France which you award me, my dear President and friend, does more than touch me deeply. I am proud of it, for I have tried to merit it in the past, and I can assure you that in leaving, with greater regret than I know how to express, this marvellous Paris and your beautiful country, I do so a greater friend of France than the friend who came to you two years ago. Upon my return to my country I shall claim my place among those of my fellow-citizens who have it at heart to be, in a certain sense, unofficial Ambassadors of France."

Bacon was to have sailed on April 10 by the great and ill-fated *Titanic*, but he cancelled his passage at the last moment. It turned out to be a momentous and fortunate

change of plans, for the *Titanic* struck an iceberg and sank in mid-ocean with the loss of hundreds of lives.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Ambassador McCormick died in 1919 in his seventieth year. White passed away in 1927.

Rather more than two years, after giving up his post, Bacon returned to Paris as a private citizen. The Great War had broken out and he was anxious to serve. Eventually he became attached as chief of the American Mission with General Sir Douglas Haig, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. He served through the War with distinction, but soon after its close his health failed and he died in May 1919.

CHAPTER XXII

HERRICK AND SHARP (1912–19)

"We dined for the first time in your old home and our new one to-night, *en famille.* We found the beautiful flowers that you and Mrs. Bacon were so thoughtful to send, and the conversation for the dinner—in fact until now I find myself in your room—was of you, Mrs. Bacon, and your delightful daughter. We even loved the little dog, and I am sure that you never made or never will make a more complete conquest than you have of the Herrick family.

"Of course you know that I've always thought you a most *desirable* citizen and have always admired Mrs. Bacon. It had not been my good fortune to know your daughter, but the vivid picture in my mind of you all on board the fated *Titanic* through a little selfishness on our part, or through a little nervous fear of precedent, has affected me more than I can tell you. It has compassed years of association and warmed our hearts with lasting affection for you all, and our thoughts, hopes, and ambitions for the new life upon the threshold of which we are to-night are all lost in thanksgiving for your deliverance from the cruel sea and our prayers are for your safe voyage on *La France.* . . . Had fate decreed you and your lovely family to have sailed out on the *Titanic,* France would have held no happiness for us."

So wrote, gracefully, the new Ambassador, Myron T. Herrick, to his predecessor, April 22, 1912.

It has been remarked by one who has studied the better class of American appointments abroad that the great majority of them—even since foreign elements have entered so largely into American politics—have been of men chiefly British by descent, or else whose American ancestry dates back to the very settlement of the colonies. The brilliant exceptions to this generalization are few. The Paris mission has been filled successively by men of the old American stock, from the time of Benjamin Franklin to the present.

The new Ambassador was of that stock, and descended from the same ancestors as Robert Herrick, the English poet. The ancient and honourable family of Herrick traces its origin in Britain to a Danish chief, Ericke, who invaded the island in the reign of Alfred, was subdued by that king and compelled with his followers to repeople the wasted district of East Anglia.

Sir William Herrick became one of the great moneyed men of his time, and purchased the estate of the unfortunate Earl of Essex, at East Beau Manor Park, in Leicestershire, the chief seat of the family for the past three hundred years. It came eventually to be occupied by Mrs. Sophia Perry Herrick, whom the American Ambassador to France, a descendant of Eric the Forester, used frequently to visit when in England.

Robert Herrick, author of *The Hesperides*, was a nephew of Sir William Herrick. The fifth son of Sir William, Henry Herrick, was the founder of the American branch of the family. He voyaged to Virginia on one of his father's mercantile ventures, and thence to Salem, Massachusetts, where in 1639 he helped to establish the first church.

Myron T. Herrick, himself once a farm-boy, rising at four o'clock on cold spring mornings to work in the fields, later a brilliantly successful lawyer, then an important banker, in close touch with the needs of western agricultural communities, had been recently governor of one of the great commonwealths which compose the American Republic.

When he accepted the post at Paris Governor Herrick was deeply engrossed in a scheme for establishing agricultural credit banks in America. He had devoted many years of study to the question of giving greater fluidity to land values and land credits. He wished, in order to intensify cultivation so as to keep pace with the vast growth of population and consumption, to extend the principle of a loan system similar to that of the Crédit Foncier in France and other European land-loan systems, and he believed that while fulfilling his diplomatic duties he could still pursue his object.

For the first months, therefore, of his mission Mr. Herrick regarded France from its economic rather than from its

political aspect, as his reports to the State Department testify ; but he could hardly fail to perceive, in the distance, the oncoming of the cloud which was destined to darken and devastate Europe. Contrary to general expectations, the Presidential Election in 1912 resulted in a Democratic administration at home, but President Wilson was in no haste to replace Mr. Herrick, and it was not until the spring of 1914 that his successor was named, and not till months later that the latter was ready to sail.

Ambassador Herrick had made a favourable impression on Paris and upon his compatriots there ; but his mission had been too brief for the impression to be enduring. Had he presented his letters of recall a week—even three days sooner than the date he had fixed—August 3, 1914—his whole future history and an important chapter in Franco-American relations would have been altered. For on August 3 all Europe was ablaze, and the American Ambassador, whose trunks were packed for the voyage, unpacked them again. His successor had not arrived.

Paris, on the fateful Saturday, August 1, was crowded with travelling Americans who became, not unreasonably, alarmed at the prospect. To them their Ambassador issued a reassuring message. They need have no hesitation in remaining in Paris. They were amongst friends, and no passports would be required. On the following day optimism did not prevail : war with Germany being declared, and the German army being on the move, the Americans were now clamorous to return to their own country. The banks were closed, and they could get no money. The steamships were overcrowded or commandeered, no more passengers could be taken, many thousands were stranded in a foreign land. Mr. Herrick instantly took steps to form a committee to deal with the plight, of which Mr. Chauncey Depew (then in Paris) and Mr. H. H. Harjes, the banker, were leading members. On the following day—that on which the Ambassador was to have bidden farewell to President Poincaré at the Élysée—he actually took over the German Embassy, installing an American staff there and hoisting an American flag over the palatial edifice from which his late diplomatic colleague, Baron von Schoen, had retired in such haste !

Also, an American Ambulance was organized, destined to occupy the new and spacious Lycée Pasteur as a hospital if the French Government agreed.

After these activities it is perhaps no matter of surprise that Ambassador Herrick should have been asked by his compatriots in Paris to remain at his post.

"I well remember [he said six years afterwards] when by strange chance the news of the declaration of war by Germany on Russia reached me at the American Embassy, where were gathered some of the official men of France, the President of the Municipal Council among the number, in social intercourse. The news had been brought by Mr. Bliss, the Counsellor of the Embassy, from the Quai d'Orsay. The unbelievable thing had happened and then the joy went out of the hearts of men.

"Thereafter, event followed event too rapidly for memory or record, and the great invading army of Germany, disregarding human rights and international law, like an irresistible flood, surged into Belgium and Luxembourg, and ran amuck across the lowlands of Flanders, violating a host of precedents and laws which not only France and the United States but the whole world held sacred, violating the very frontiers between right and wrong (*vifs applaudissements*). The library of Louvain had vanished in smoke, and the sacred treasures of world culture had been either rifled or scattered in ashes.

"Before so sudden an outrage on international law precedent was swept to the winds. Unexpected responsibilities fell upon one. There was no time to philosophize or to stand on ceremony—barely to await orders."[1]

"It is [observed the Paris *New York Herald*] no reflection on Mr. Sharp, who is expected in a few weeks, but Mr. Herrick has established himself so firmly in the esteem of Americans here, and is so thoroughly conversant with every detail of the many complex and critical questions that now require constant attention, that it is felt that no newcomer could hope to deal with the situation as effectively."

Daily the Embassy was crowded with hundreds of persons urgently seeking monetary help and transport. One day, in the crowd, a member of the staff discovered two women

[1] Speech at the Hôtel de Ville, July 26, 1920.

overcome with fatigue. He promptly took them aside, and questioned them. One proved to be Mrs. Wilson Howe, the sister of the President!

A special form of passport had to be invented to meet the demands of the French Government. It ran:

"The bearer is recognized as a citizen of the United States of America in accordance with the requirements of the French Government in regard to foreigners."

This was signed by a secretary and bore the Embassy seal. Four thousand five hundred of these emergency passports were issued within a week. Senator Oliver, himself stranded penniless in Paris, loudly demanded that President Wilson should send a fleet of transports to repatriate Americans, who were now in danger of being shut up in a besieged capital, and on August 14, the Ambassador was notified that transports would be sent. But the more urgent need was money, and a week later four kegs and an iron chest containing a quarter of a million dollars in gold eagles and double eagles arrived at the Embassy, guarded by a dozen American officers and twelve policemen.

This considerable sum was doled out to the needy.

Meanwhile, the Germans were drawing nearer the gates of Paris. From the first the sympathy of Americans at large had been with the French; but active partisanship involved risks and the President's proclamation of American neutrality was posted up as a warning at the Embassy.

On September 2 the French Government quitted Paris for Bordeaux. Ambassador Herrick, together with the Spanish and Swiss Ministers, decided, like his predecessor, Washburne, to remain in the capital.

In making this choice Mr. Herrick said that he regarded Paris "not only as the capital of France, but as that 'Metropolis of a world' spoken of by Marcus Aurelius. He felt that he was the American Ambassador to both these cities."

"In his eyes the Metropolis of the World possesses a Government invisible doubtless but perpetually present and one with which he wished to remain in touch. It is at one and the same time to Paris, in its period of trial, and to the fatherland of the human race, that Mr. Herrick wishes to give the pledge

of his affection. Thus he is remaining as a link between those of his compatriots who are residing amongst us and the citizens of the free Republic across the sea that has more than once declared itself the Sister Republic and which professes as much love for French ' traditions ' as the French esteem the passion for ' progress ' of which Americans give the example." [1]

Before his departure for Bordeaux, President Poincaré had an interview with the American Ambassador. In the latter's own words:

" There was a haunting fear that Paris would be taken and that her great art treasures would be destroyed ; in fact, that Paris itself, the greatest art treasure of all the world, would be laid in ashes. I have just returned from the scene of that ring of fire that marks the devastated regions, which is ample evidence that apprehensions as to what might happen were well founded.

" It seemed to me in those fateful hours, clear and well defined, that as the representative of the greatest neutral power I should remain in Paris and exercise all my power to save the art treasure of Paris from the fate of that of Louvain, for while it is true that France held the title and was owner, in a much larger sense my country and all the world are joint owners in that art treasure.

" It was on September 2nd, at the Élysée, that President Poincaré told me, in substance, that he believed it to be the intention of the Germans to destroy Paris if France did not surrender. He added that General Galliéni was in command and that Paris would be defended at the outer gates, that Paris would be defended at the inner gates, that Paris would be defended by the valour of her troops, that France would never surrender although beloved Paris be laid in ashes. The next day, General Galliéni, the President of the Municipal Council and others came to the Embassy to speak of what could be done for the safeguarding of the great art treasures."

On September 8 Mr. Herrick received the following telegram from Berlin:

" German General Staff recommend that Americans leave Paris via Rouen, Le Havre. They will have to leave soon if they wish to go."

[1] *Le Matin*, September 5, 1914.

MYRON T. HERRICK.

He immediately replied :

" This Embassy has for some time past been advising Americans to leave Paris and many have already departed. As I represent many important interests here I deem it imperative to remain with my staff. Under all circumstances I feel satisfied that should German forces enter Paris necessary measures will be taken to protect not only American property but other property entrusted to my care."

By this time a curious official situation had arisen at the Embassy : Mr. Herrick's successor had arrived, prepared to take up his duties. Should Mr. Herrick leave at once or should he stay on ? A number of his friends, headed by Mr. James Gordon Bennett of the *Herald*, resolved to answer the question for him. A meeting was held and a cable was sent to Washington, with the result that it was announced in the *Herald* on September 6 " that Mr. Sharp will not take up his duties until the end of the war." At that time it was thought that the war would be over speedily. Nevertheless, the announcement did not exactly mirror President Wilson's decision. Mr. Herrick remained for the present and carried out his duties. On September 15 came the battle of the Marne, averting immediate danger to Paris. On the 27th one of the bombs which German aeroplanes were now dropping over the city fell near the Chancellery in the Rue de Chaillot. The Ambassador had a few moments earlier been walking over the very spot where the bomb fell and occasioned loss of life, and his escape was considered providential. When someone congratulated him he said, " Don't you think the death of the American Ambassador would have been more useful to France than his life ? "—a happy phrase which was widely repeated.

At last, in the third week of November, a peremptory telegram came from Washington that Mr. Sharp should assume his duties. The friends of Mr. Herrick bade him farewell at the annual Thanksgiving Day banquet, at which he said :

" There must be something good to come out of the dreadful experiences through which humanity is passing. It has brought out a new spirit in all the world. Men and

women by millions in countries that are not at war are turning all their thoughts to one subject—how to aid the suffering, succour the helpless and benefit the human race mired deep in a bloody conflict. . . . I would feel like a deserter if I were going away of my own choice from these loyal men and women."

Like "the lads in the trenches," he had stayed on only because he could be of service.

Three days later he set out for home. His nearly four months of supplementary service left grateful memories in the hearts of Frenchmen, which were to find full and emotional expression six years later when a great reception was held at the Hôtel de Ville in his honour, and eventually that service was to lead to his reappointment as Ambassador by President Harding in 1921.[1]

"'Have you heard the latest reports?' 'Do you know that the Germans are at the very gates of Paris?' I had but disembarked from the splendid steamer, *La France*, at Havre, in the early morning of the second day of September, 1914, when Mr. Osborne, our Consul, introducing himself to me, asked these questions. They came with startling surprise, for during the voyage I had read only very brief wireless messages set forth in bulletins posted at the head of the staircase of the steamer. While not of a reassuring nature, they had given but the slightest intimation of the real situation."

Thus wrote Ambassador William Graves Sharp in the autobiography upon which he was engaged at the time of his death.

He continues:

"On the nineteenth day of the preceding June, six weeks before the declaration of war, I had been nominated by President Wilson as Ambassador Extraordinary and Pleni-

[1] "Mr. Herrick has been popular with all, the French, the English, whose Foreign Minister has communicated with him; the Germans whose interests he has been representing; the Austro-Hungarians, but most of all by the American residents in Paris, to whom he has been not only an Ambassador and friend, but also a leader.

"Recently, the interests of another belligerent have been taken over by the American Embassy, those of Turkey; and, inasmuch as Turkey has had the closest financial arrangements with France for many years, this task is one of considerable difficulty. The Embassy staff has grown from twelve persons to fifty."—*New York Herald*, November 20, 1914.

potentiary to France ; the Senate had paid me the compliment of confirming my nomination without the customary reference to a committee. I was then serving my third consecutive term in Congress from the fourteenth Ohio District. At this time there were several diplomatic posts of the first order and importance to be filled and my name had been urged for the post at Paris by Senator Pomerene and heartily seconded by the Honourable Newton D. Baker, then mayor of the city of Cleveland. My colleagues from Ohio, without my knowledge, had also loyally recommended my selection to the President."[1]

The delay in departing for his post had been due to the very long and serious illness of Mrs. Sharp, from which she was then only slowly recovering. On the steamer one of his fellow passengers had been Robert Bacon, former Ambassador to France.

" One day, about midway on our voyage, he had introduced himself to me, and I then learned for the first time that he was on board the vessel. What his mission was, if he had any, in returning to Paris at that particular time, I never learned. I gathered, however, from our talks, that he was simply one of the many other Americans whose former temporary residence among the French people had drawn them to that country in its hour of need. After hearing the alarming news of the enemy's progress, he hesitated for no little time before making a decision to leave Havre. He said to me : ' Just before I left New York Mrs. Bacon made me promise that I would be back at the end of a month. I am greatly puzzled to know what to do, for I fear that if I once get into Paris, I may not be able soon to get out again.' Having in mind evidently the experience of the memorable siege of Paris in '70–'71 and not being provided with an accommodation balloon such as that with which Gambetta made his sensational escape over the German Lines, his concern was not lessened. However, he decided to proceed upon his journey upon being assured by one of the attachés of the American Embassy, just coming on the scene, that the situation was not as critical as represented.

" At four o'clock in the morning, Thursday, the third of September, our automobiles stopped in front of the Hôtel

[1] MS. *Memoirs*, generously placed at the disposal of the author by the Ambassador's son, Mr. George C. Sharp.

de Crillon, Place de la Concorde. This was to be my home until Mrs. Sharp and the other members of my family came to join me early in the following spring. It also became, shortly after, the stopping-place of many of the British statesmen whose presence was so necessary in Paris. In those days I saw, in his favourite corner in the dining-room, the leonine head of Lloyd George, and about him in earnest conversation his confrères. Later still came Colonel House, the silent and sagacious friend of President Wilson, of whom a newspaper reporter, being disappointed on one occasion with the result of an interview, exclaimed : ' Beside Colonel House the Sphinx is like a chattering old maid at a pink tea.' To have kept tab upon all those who were admitted to his rooms might have furnished an index, like the proverbial straw, to know which way the wind was blowing.

" As one is wont to regard, with feelings akin to affection, the place which he has been permitted to call his home during times of stress, so I shall always remember with sentimental regard the Hôtel de Crillon, with its columnated *façade* of the architecture of a century and a half ago. From the large front windows of my suite of rooms overlooking the Place de la Concorde, a sky-line lay before me to the south of unrivalled interest and charm, embracing as it does a wide sweep of some of the most notable structures in the world.

" Coincident with my arrival in Paris, the French Government had left for Bordeaux, where the capital of the nation was for a time to be. Not until the end of that year did it return to Paris. During succeeding months, opponents of the Government seized upon this action as a cause for criticism. The fact, however, that events turned out in such a way as to make its going unnecessary certainly does not justify this criticism. That there was a real danger of the occupation of Paris by the enemy at the moment of its leaving was unquestioned. What criticism might not have been more justly levelled at the Government had it not left the capital and the enemy had succeeded in taking it."

When Mr. Sharp thus arrived in Paris the odd coincidence of the arrival also of ex-Ambassador Bacon and the fact that there was already an American Ambassador in full control of his functions and privileges naturally caused a sensation. Some, even in high official circles, were inclined to see in the situation a " diplomatic triumvirate " of grave

international significance. Sharp's antecedents, his personal friendship with the President, his long connection with the Committee on Foreign Affairs in Congress, his sympathy with France, were recognized in some quarters, and by these his coming was welcomed. "He will be able," remarked *La Liberté*, "to certify that which he knows and will be debited against this German army that drops bombs on open cities, fires upon ambulances and destroys such a centre of science and art as Louvain."

But the newly appointed ambassador, although laudably eager to assume his mission, had no wish to do so merely to gratify his own vanity. He therefore resolved to consult only the public interest. If it would facilitate the various measures which were going forward, either promoted or actively supported by his predecessor, that he should remain for the present in the background, he was prepared to defer his presentation. But it was difficult to know just how far this was the case. The friends of Mr. Herrick, led by Mr. Gordon Bennett of the *Herald*, clamoured for his retention. The friends of Mr. Sharp, on the other hand, were equally strong for his taking over the Embassy. It was pointed out that the rôle of Ambassador, while representative of the country at large, had also been held to be directly representative of the American chief executive, and that in the case of relations with a belligerent Power one politically out of sympathy with the administration might precipitate action or controversy having definite effects upon international policy. Mr. Herrick, it is true, had coped already with the situation, and had gained much credit in consequence; but Mr. Sharp might do equally well if he were given the chance.

As Mr. Sharp afterwards wrote:

"The period following my arrival in Paris became one of increasing embarrassment to me. Though it was understood at the time of my departure for France that I was not immediately to assume charge of my mission, the exigencies of the situation seeming to dictate a deviation from the custom of the outgoing representative leaving either before or upon the arrival of his successor, the war [he said at the time] has upset many diplomatic and other precedents. At this

critical period it is quite obvious that Mr. Herrick could not desert his post. The first duty of an Ambassador is to maintain the friendly relations between his country and that to which he is accredited. It is almost unnecessary to say that there will be no change of policy after my arrival as Ambassador to France; the friendship between the United States and France was never firmer than it is to-day.

"Probably no country in the world is more wonderfully admired for its high degree of civilization than France. But it is my duty as the future representative of the United States to be absolutely neutral in everything concerning the present conflict. It cannot be too strongly stated that my Government will not swerve from its attitude of strict neutrality. The more impartial we remain the stronger our position will be. Indeed for all the belligerents when the time comes for discussing the conditions of peace. For I shall not be thought indiscreet if I give voice to the thought held by many people that the rôle of the United States is bound to be a most important one at that moment. What nation could be more fitted to take the lead in the peace negotiations?"

But, as we have seen, advices from Washington in November had indicated that "the equivocal position in which circumstances had placed me must end."

"At the same time the delay in taking over my mission had not been without its compensation. I had been enabled to acquaint myself thoroughly with a many-angled situation. From the day of the assumption of my duties, this knowledge stood me in good stead. In his first letter to me, upon taking over the mission, President Wilson had expressed his appreciation of the 'admirable way in which you have behaved in very trying circumstances' (to use his language), expressing at the same time his greatest confidence in my success. To the last day of my stewardship of the high office to which he had appointed me, that confidence was so often manifested towards me as to make it a veritable tower of strength in times when assurance of such support was most needed. Indeed, it was that kind of support and loyalty, I take it, which General Pershing, long after the great conflict had ended, so feelingly told me the President had always given him, in sustaining his own acts.

"I was now to have the unique experience, among many

others which the war has made so common, of being the first American Ambassador to present his letter of credence to the head of Government of France at a place other than Paris. On the night of the first of December, accompanied by my son, I left for Bordeaux, where we arrived on the following morning at an early hour. Mr. Garrett, special agent of the American Embassy, kindly opened his house to us during our stay.

" As I had made the long journey for the sole purpose of presenting my letter of credence—a formal ceremony enjoined by the State Department upon all new Ambassadors and Ministers—naturally every other thing connected with my trip became merely incidental. What I should say in my address to the President of the French Republic was a question which, in ordinary times, could have been easily answered. But this was not an ordinary time ; it was a time when every word spoken by America's representative would be given the greatest weight and would be most closely scrutinized. America was the foremost neutral nation of all the Powers. Our Government was not only pledged to neutrality, but had accepted the obligation of looking after the interests of all the Central Powers who had entrusted them to our care. In a most formal manner it had in fact enjoined the observance of the strictest neutrality on the part of all American citizens at home or abroad. Indeed in his appeal of August 18, 1914, to the American people for restraint in discussing the war President Wilson had said :

" ' I venture, therefore, my fellow-countrymen, to speak a solemn word of warning to you against that deepest, most subtle, most essential breach of neutrality which may spring out of partisanship, out of passionately taking sides. The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name during these days that are to try men's souls. We must be impartial in thought as well as in action, must put a curb upon our sentiments as well as upon every transaction that might be construed as a preference of one party to the struggle before another.' "

Mr. Sharp notes :

" From the very beginning of the war, official notices proclaiming and enjoining such neutrality had been posted upon our bulletin board at the Chancellery ; even those who ran might read. And yet more was expected from me than the expression of mere platitudes, which, in ordinary times, would

create about as much interest as an exchange of observations on the weather. My dilemma was a real one.

It was upon the good offices of an official, endowed with special authority, that the Ambassador at length relied. "At the appointed hour, early in the morning, a coach and footman drove up with Mr. Martin to Mr. Garrett's residence, to conduct me to the temporary executive offices of the Government which were in the Hôtel de Ville, the City Hall of Bordeaux. Ordinarily, when such ceremony takes place in Paris, it is attended with considerable pomp, the carriage containing the Ambassador being duly escorted by representatives of the French Government and a guard of honour being posted outside to receive him at the Élysée Palace. But in the unusual situation which now surrounded the presentation of my letter of credence, much of this programme was necessarily dispensed with. There was little ceremony beyond passing between the uniformed guards drawn up in line on each side of the walk in front of the building.

"In giving publicity to a description of this ceremony, there was an amusing illustration of the fertility of resource of the American news correspondent when occasion requires. A few of these correspondents being at the time in Bordeaux, sent over to their papers at home interesting accounts of the event. Not to be outdone, however, by their more favoured associates located on the spot, full accounts were also sent over by those stationed in Paris giving a vivid description of the presentation of my letter of credence at the Élysée Palace. A graphic story was told of the brilliant escort that was afforded me down the Champs Élysées to the Palace, the playing of the band of the Republican Guard, and my reception by the President of the Republic!"

The new Ambassador in his address said:

"Mr. President, in conforming to this ceremonial custom in presenting my letter of credence, I have the great honour and pleasure to convey to the Government of the French Republic the best wishes of the President of the United States of America for its prosperity, and to your Excellency, his high personal regard. Let me assure you that in this expression of good-will, now ripened by the tradition of more than a century into a lasting friendship and brotherly love, the people of my country most heartily join. From the very character of that affection and the historic events which gave

it origin, I am persuaded that it will be as enduring as the life of these two great Nations.

" During my sojourn among the French people I have come to have an added regard for their exemplification of a brave and patriotic citizenship. In expressing the earnest hope that out of the trials of the present hour may soon come the blessing of a lasting and beneficent Peace, I but voice the prayers of my countrymen."

To this President Poincaré made response:

" I thank you for the wishes that you have expressed for the re-establishment of a Peace ' long and happy.' If it had depended only upon the French Government, peace would never have been broken. We have responded to a brutal attack, with that patriotism and that bravery to which I am sure you will render homage. We are determined to fulfil to the end the duty which has been imposed upon us. That it may be ' long and happy ' ; that it may not be illusory and deceptive, it is necessary that the Peace be guaranteed by an integral reparation of violated rights and safeguarded against future attacks."

Mr. Sharp afterwards wrote:

" As I review now the solemnity of that hour, and again read the exchanges of sentiments made that day between the President of the Republic and myself, I am impressed with the consistency with which a mutually friendly relationship was maintained between the two countries throughout the trying times of the war. I was also convinced, even in that early day, a conviction expressed in both addresses, that the peace that should finally come out of such a titanic struggle should be lasting and guaranteed in such a way as to be safe against future attacks.

" I know of no more appropriate place than at this point to characterize as inane and without foundation in fact the story widely circulated to the effect that peace between France and Germany was prevented by the assurance, from a certain group of Americans in Paris, that if France abstained from making peace, America would take sides with her in a defensive war. The moving events of that crucial period were all against such a thing. I had myself not only no communication, directly or indirectly, with any member of the Ministry, from the day of my reaching Paris until three months later

at the time of presenting my letter of credence, but I did not hear of such assurance being given by any other American. Even if such assurance had been given, it could not have come with any official sanction, and at best only a sentimental value could have been attached to it.

"As a witness to the cold reception in Paris of President Wilson's address before the Senate of January 22, 1917, in which he gave utterance to the famous phrase 'Peace without Victory,' I can testify to the painful impression which it created. It came as a wet blanket thrown over the efforts of those who advocated peace only by a military victory."

During the thirty days preceding his arrival, the news despatched every hour had told of fresh advances by the enemy, of new destructions of towns and of increased brutal outrages upon their defenceless peoples. There was nothing left to conjecture as to the fate which awaited towns yet untaken. The despairing cry of those already fallen had travelled fast and far.

Of Paris the Ambassador wrote:

"For one who had been familiar with the every-day life of the city in times of peace, to understand the transformation which had come over a city, famed for the cosmopolitan crowds on its streets, its sociability and gaiety, the change in the appearance of everything, except its inanimate objects, could only be explained by the occurrence of events of dynamic import.

"The great metropolis had suddenly become a city of women. There was scarcely a vocation which was not all but pre-empted by them, even to the most common kind of heavy, manual labour—yes, even to driving taxicabs and operating the heaviest kind of factory machinery. By them, too, were borne, during all the months to follow, an inconceivably heavy burden of sorrow. A pathetic sight, not uncommonly witnessed by me, was that of weeping women, who, whether standing in the doorways of their little shops or in the centre of a group of sympathizing friends, had just received news of the death of loved ones at the front. And, as the war continued, I became a witness to such scenes in every portion of France. Deepest mourning everywhere characterized their dress."

[*Wide World Photos.*

W. G. SHARP.

The Ambassador pays a tribute to the Americans in Paris who seconded his efforts during the war:

"A majority of those who came had been residents of Paris for many years, and not only their familiarity with the language, but their acquaintance with government officials, gave to their work the greatest efficiency. Bankers, professional and business men predominated in this circle of earnest-minded men—usually comprising a score or more in number at a session. The names of Hermann Harjes, as President, Judge Walter Berry, Charles Carroll, M. Couchard, Doctor Watson, George Munroe, Herbert Howland, James Barbour, James Hazen Hyde, Ridgway Knight, Maginn, and many others hardly less active will ever be associated with the direction of those early endeavours. Back of them, as indeed back of every helpful movement having the accomplishment of good as its object, were the wise counsel and open purse of Edward Tuck, an American whose patriotic love for his country neither his wealth nor his long residence abroad had impaired. Among my most enjoyable experiences during my residence in Paris were the occasional week-end visits which, upon invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Tuck, I made to their beautiful château 'Vert-Mont,' distant from Paris twenty or more kilometers on the road to St.-Germain. Originally a part of Napoleon's estate of Malmaison, and just across the road from which is still located the château where the Empress Joséphine lived, the grounds, in all their charm and beauty of design, formed a veritable Elysium. Such brief sojourns amid such an entrancing environment afforded a most welcome respite and diversion from my labours."

What those labours came to be during the ensuing four years of war only those familiar with the American Embassy at that dark period can well divine. It is true that after America's entry into the war the diplomatic labours were shared by Colonel House, who set up an establishment at the Crillon; but already in 1915 the staff had increased fourfold, and questions of serious moment to America's interests arose daily for settlement. One of the most notable of Sharp's many personal reports to the President concerned the torpedoing of the Channel steamer *Sussex* with its proof of German culpability. In his son, George Clough Sharp, a youth not yet seventeen, the Ambassador had from first

to last a loyal, intelligent and reliable secretary, one carrying on the tradition of other precocious youths: Franklin, Adams and Gallatin in the long past. Of his colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps Mr. Sharp has left some entertaining pictures. When he had become settled at the Embassy his name was at the bottom of the official list, which is arranged according to the chronological order of their presentation.

"Above me in the list, in the following order from the bottom to the top, were Marquis Valtierra of Spain, Baron Ishii of Japan, M. Isvolsky of Russia, Senator Tittoni of Italy; and Sir Francis (afterwards Lord) Bertie of Great Britain, who had by reason of seniority of service in Paris the honour of being the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. Had the war not deprived Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey of representation at Paris, Baron Schoen, Count Szecsin and Ribbat Pasha, the Ambassadors respectively of those countries, would also have occupied higher places on the list than the new American Ambassador. Even as it was, the top position looked very remote to me. And yet, by the rapid changes in national affairs brought on by the war, I was successor of one after another of those above me appointed by their respective Governments. First departed my good friend Marquis Valtierra. I was no longer at the bottom. Then followed Baron Ishii. Soon after Senator Tittoni left. A year later M. Isvolsky, broken in health, was superseded and I ranked next to Lord Bertie. He had served in the diplomatic service of his country over fifty years, during the last thirteen of which he had represented Great Britain in Paris. As he had reached the age limit early in the beginning of the war normally he would have been retired at that time, but the need for his counsel and the benefit of his experience was felt in such a crisis, and he remained well into the war. When, in the spring of 1918, he was relieved of his mission, I became in his place the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, the first American Ambassador to France to attain that position. In the more even tenor of political conditions in time of peace, a newcomer on the diplomatic field might have to serve at one post a dozen or more years to attain this distinction."

The problems created by the war were discussed with a candour that could not have been possible in peace time.

Sharp's very position, first as a neutral and later as the representative of the most powerful belligerent country, and a wholly disinterested one, invited unlimited confidences. At times, particularly when participation in allied conferences was being arranged, his colleagues representing the smallest Powers used little reserve in their complaints to him of the threatened denial to allow them any hearing. Some of these incidents were characterized by features more amusing then serious. On one occasion the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Montenegrin Government, which held its temporary seat at Neuilly near Paris, came to the Chancellery to seek the Ambassador's intercession with the French Government to the end that Montenegro might be represented in one of these conferences to be held during the following week. Sharp, thereupon, informed him that the American Ambassador also had not been invited to attend. He burst out laughing at the thought of it, and made no more protest at being slighted by the big Powers. Also bitter complaints were made to him by the Ministers of Serbia and Greece, and, at a later stage in the war, by the representative of the Jugo-Slavs.

Ambassador Sharp practised much restraint and was forced to endure many trials and humiliations before his country entered the war; but eventually he had his reward in the tremendous burst of French gratitude and enthusiasm which greeted him at the Hôtel de Ville in April 1917, when the Stars and Stripes floated for the first time over that edifice. More than a year later, on July 4, 1918, he took part in the ceremony of rechristening the lengthy and spacious Avenue du Trocadéro by the name of President Wilson, and on July 14 he collaborated with Mayor (afterwards Premier) Herriot at Lyons in inaugurating the new Pont Wilson.

When, in the autumn of 1918, the Germans began their final retirement, there were so many conflicting military reports as to the exact situation that Mr. Sharp was desired to make a personal report to the President, who was awaiting anxiously the conclusion of hostilities. He therefore obtained a pass for himself and one of his staff and accompanied by a French officer drove directly towards St. Quentin. His first stop was at General Debeney's

headquarters, where an effort was made to dissuade him from proceeding farther, as the enemy's artillery was very active. Nevertheless, in spite of the danger, he insisted on pushing on. Once or twice he had a narrow escape from bursting shells, and eventually, on October 18, was the first American civilian to enter St. Quentin. That very night he began a lengthy despatch to the President giving the results of his personal observation.

When the Armistice came no man felt greater relief and thankfulness than America's Ambassador in Paris. His modest and retiring disposition and utter freedom from personal self-seeking were known to all. He never swerved in his loyalty to the President, who, on his arrival in France, hardly accorded his official representative all the honour and consideration which his long and steady service merited. Woodrow Wilson had many counsellors in Paris; Sharp probably felt chagrin that he had not been made a member of the Peace Delegation. Yet, if so, he never showed it. The sudden and alarming illness of his twin-brother in America just before Christmas made him request leave to return home, and when, at the close of January, he returned to Paris, having attended his brother's death-bed, the Peace Conference was in full swing. What the French capital was during the great Peace Conference, in the spring of 1919, a thousand pens have recorded.

But Ambassador Sharp's work was at an end, and he only awaited the arrival of his successor in April 1919 to present his letter of recall at the Élysée. The outgoing and incoming Ambassadors, however, did not meet. In Paris a mighty change was coming over the scene, and a new and trying era in Franco-American relations had already begun.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Mr. Sharp died at his home in Elyria, Ohio, in 1922.

CHAPTER XXIII

WALLACE AND HERRICK (1919–27)

"When I arrived the War was over, but the terms of Peace had yet to be presented. France was triumphant but weary. She had fought her way to victory through years of suffering, which spared no one. Her fair fields were devastated, her cities wrecked and many of her ancient landmarks toppled into ruins. Her heroic sons had perished in hundreds of thousands, and thousands were wounded almost unto death. When peace came, on every side were seen the halt and the blind, the sick and the weary. And yet on every face a smile; for France was victorious. They had helped to win the battles and were now free to aid in her restoration." [1]

When President Wilson became aware of the magnitude of the forces arrayed against him and his Peace policy, and the danger of misunderstanding and reaction which threatened him at home, he prepared to hasten back to Washington and place the issue squarely before the Senate and the American people.

His two months' sojourn had convinced him of the value of propitiating French opinion; but in his case there was the whole of Europe, and indeed of the universe, to propitiate. Ambassador Sharp, bereaved and shaken in health from his four years' service, was about to depart. Who would succeed him? More clearly than ever did the President realize the importance of having at the Embassy an exceptional man, one, if possible, aloof from the political hurly-burly and free from ambition of political office, who fully shared his views and whose personality and antecedents would inspire confidence in the leading protagonists now assembled in Paris.

Apart from Colonel House, he knew of but one who perfectly fulfilled these conditions; so that, when on February 15

[1] Speech of the Hon. Hugh C. Wallace, November 25, 1920.

the President, already on board the *George Washington* and sailing for home, named Hugh Campbell Wallace, there was a general feeling of satisfaction. Wallace's vigorous manhood, his nation-wide acquaintance, his high personal character, as well as his wealth and his marriage to the daughter of Chief Justice Fuller, had for years made him a well-known figure in Washington and the country. Although apparently marked out for high political office, he had seen fit at the beginning of Wilson's administration to refuse the Secretaryship of War. He was now fifty-six, and it seemed as if all office would be unacceptable to him. Yet on several occasions he had undertaken to perform delicate and confidential missions on the President's behalf. It was now reserved for him to render his friend and his country a great and memorable public service.

The Wallaces arrived in April, and the new Ambassador duly presented his letters of credence to the head of the French Republic at the Élysée.

"I come [he told President Poincaré] at the end of the World War to salute victorious France in the name of the American people. In that struggle Frenchmen and Americans fought side by side until the final victory was won on French soil under French command, and Paris, for a time the capital of the world, is now witnessing the erection of the Temple of Peace.

"We hope to dedicate that temple in the name of the League of Nations and make it its home, for the great war which was fought in defence of civilization should be the last to afflict mankind. When victory came, it was complete, and the peace which is to follow should be enduring. It is now the task of the Allied nations to confer that peace upon humanity, but first to unite the world in support of it. To that labour and the great work of reconstruction which stretches out to a new prosperity France and America, as one in aim and principle, may now dedicate their united energies."

In his reply the French President expressed the conviction that the friendship which bound France and the United States during the war would secure shortly its legitimate effects. He added, significantly, that France had suffered much, having supported on her territory the first

shock of the enemy forces and left on the battle-field the flower of the nation. He must say with sorrow, but still with pride, that no allied or associated nation had made for the common cause sacrifices comparable with those of France. The common cause having won (M. Poincaré continued) it was right that these sacrifices should be paid for, and that France should obtain, with reparations and guarantees, means with which to reconstitute her work and obtain security.

" France is confident that the affection of which the United States had given her so many proofs not only will assert itself in the conclusion of peace, but in the intimacy of future relations and in permanent collaboration."

By this time President Wilson had returned to the French capital and was now engaged in those tremendous and engrossing activities in connection with the Treaty which told so heavily on his health and political fortunes. From early morning till midnight he was beset by callers and interests to a degree which now seems incredible—fantastic. The nations of the world swarmed on his doorstep and hung upon his every glance, his every syllable. To Wallace he turned with relief, as one who would take from his shoulders the special burden of France. French appeals, French reproaches, French criticism and suspicions were already weighing him down. The new Ambassador accepted the burden gladly. With all his admiration for the President —with all his conviction of the rectitude of his policy, he could not repress certain misgivings. The harassed President had to keep his eye on a hundred nationalities. France and French public opinion could not enlist his exclusive interests. Yet upon France so much depended.

One oversight which might justly be charged against the President Wallace resolved to rectify instantly. Within three days of presenting his credentials at the Élysée, he had set out to visit the devastated regions. He saw with his own eyes the trenches, dug-outs and battle-fields of Lens, Arras, Péronne, Chaulnes and Noyon ; he mixed with the inhabitants and returned with increased admiration of the French nation and a greater appreciation of the hardships that had been endured so heroically.

"No more poignant emotions can grip the human soul than those inspired by the scenes we beheld [he said]. Here men fought for Empire and left their mark on Nature. These ruined villages, this tortured earth, this awful desolation—stretching league after league—unite in showing what men will do when they put on the livery of Imperial Militarism."

His words rang out over France—they reached the ears of the Conference itself—they touched all classes.

"We know now that France has suffered, and we know that all she has lost is a loss to the whole world. Her awful martyrdom, her heroic endurance, her indomitable fortitude cry aloud from these heaps of stones which were once peaceful homes or centres of industrial prosperity, now stilled for a brief time only. In this war the spirit of evil sat upon the throne, and sent his slaves to challenge civilization and in the battle-field, for there despotism died and the new justice, for France and for the cause of Right, was born."

This was the language on the lips of an accredited American spokesman for which France for months had been waiting. The effect was immediate and thrilling—and all over the country it was said that Woodrow Wilson had at last spoken through the mouth of his trusted envoy. The tone of the French Press, which had grown almost hostile, became again cordial.

At the Embassy, the work into which the new Ambassador now plunged was unprecedented. In March France had denounced all her commercial treaties, expecting a renewal within three to six months. Her treaty with America had existed since 1822, nearly one hundred years. The denunciation made this famous treaty inoperative after a period of six months. Thus, by September, there would no longer be any treaty to bind the commercial relations of America and her great sister Republic.

Among the many complications was the fact that one of France's chief exports was wine. That was all cut off now so far as America was concerned and might never again be renewed. France would lose that great revenue from America. Another complication was the fact that France would not permit her actual currency to leave the country.

If her merchants imported goods from foreign lands, they demanded extended credit, one or more years. An economic commission of the American Government worked at the problem in conjunction with the Embassy.

Soon after greeting his staff, Ambassador Wallace became aware of a practice which had latterly grown up of sending and receiving cipher cablegrams and telegrams without the knowledge of the head of the mission. Such a practice was intolerable and might have the most serious consequences.

Accordingly, the Ambassador announced his decision that no cipher or other message should be sent through the Embassy unless it had been previously deciphered and shown to him; he wished personally to see every telegram sent and received, even although this involved reading two or three hundred telegrams a day. It involved great additional work on him, but Mr. Wallace followed his system to the end, and if any cables were submitted without deciphered transcription they were promptly vetoed.

At this time the Embassy was receiving several thousand letters a day, practically all the letters from Washington coming in care of the Embassy to be forwarded. Ordinarily, the *personnel* had numbered about twenty-five, but during Ambassador Wallace's term the force was increased to more than two hundred and fifty. In addition to the vast labour at the Chancellery, there were social duties to be performed on an unparalleled scale and of a variety unequalled during long years. One has only to turn to the newspapers and printed memoirs of that period to find descriptions of the Paris of the Peace Conference of 1919. The whole civilized and semi-civilized world was there represented and figures of international renown thronged the streets, salons and dinner-tables. A mere list of the diners, first in the Avenue d'Eylau and later in the Place d'Iéna,[1] indicates the whole social and political history of an era.

Over those marvellous assemblies the gracious, tactful spirit of Mrs. Wallace presided; and the tributes paid her by her own countrymen and those of France were echoed

[1] A beautiful mansion overlooking the Champ de Mars, purchased from Prince Radziwill.

by the illustrious statesmen of the many countries represented at the Conference.

When at last the work of the Peace Conference was over and the Treaty signed, a great dinner-party was planned by M. Poincaré, in Mr. Wilson's honour. But the American President was now on the eve of his departure for home. Suffering a natural reaction, he shrank from any further social attentions. In vain Mr. Wallace represented to his friend the importance of the occasion—the President was obdurate. The Ambassador perceived how unfortunate this obduracy might prove to be. The President had the amiable habit of taking tea with his wife for a few minutes every afternoon. On entering the drawing-room he met the Ambassadress and rightly interpreted her troubled expression. "Why," he asked her, "is your husband so anxious for me to attend this dinner?" "Because your refusal, Mr. President, will give great offence. Don't forget that you are going in two or three days, leaving him behind to bear the brunt." The justice of the remark instantly struck Wilson. "What you say is true," he said; "I will go." He duly attended the dinner, which was a great success.

"Left behind to bear the brunt" was an accurate description of the American Ambassador's position for the next two years. On June 30, 1919, he wrote to a friend, and his letter constitutes a summing-up of the whole situation:

"I have just returned from Brest, whither I had gone with the President and Mrs. Wilson. They sailed for home yesterday. The President looked very tired. Indeed, his appearance caused us both distress and concern. His weariness is so evident that he impressed me as being absolutely worn out after the Peace Conference.

"It is no wonder, and I at all events am not surprised, for I know how great was the burden of his Government work. But there was more than this, his task was made very much harder by the fact that he lacked adequate support in our Delegation, being himself the outstanding figure from the point of view of ability.

"Those were the conditions under which he found himself pitted against practically the entire world, standing single-handed to deal with all the best statesmen in Europe. It was an entirely disinterested fight on his part, since America

wanted nothing and all the other countries wanted something. He spoke clearly in the name of America to voice the aspirations of the peoples towards brotherhood. His own horror of bloodshed was well known, but when we entered the war he conducted the efforts of America with the maximum of energy to put down once and for all time the gravest menace ever raised against human thought and human activities, and he was consistent in seeking to make a peace which would end war.

"I myself believe firmly in his peace policy as the policy of the future. The world will render just tribute to the great man who first put that policy in concrete form and made it applicable.

"Woodrow Wilson has high, but always very practical ideals, for he never forgets the human limitations which lead to injustice among men. This great Democrat will be remembered for many things, but most of all for his work as a peace-maker.

"He towered above all others at the Conference, and triumphed owing to his own ability alone. But because a just peace it satisfied nobody. The Treaty is hard on Germany and is rightly so, since Germany can now be compelled to pay the European Allies for the harm she did them. The Treaty need only be applied strictly, and when that is accomplished, then the full benefit will be reached from the labours of the League of Nations.

"Yet the Italian Delegation at one moment withdrew from the Conference, and the French Press, as well as the Press of all Europe indeed, has attacked him in a way he has felt very keenly.

"In fact I am told there is no precedent for a foreign Chief of State to have been so attacked and denounced while being the guest of France.

"It seemed to be forgotten everywhere even that it was on his initiative that the return of Alsace and Lorraine to France was imposed upon Germany prior to the opening of any conversations, that is, as a condition of the Armistice and not as a clause of the Peace Treaty. And you of course know that, far from putting a premature end to the war, we were prepared to launch between eleven and noon on November 11, 1918, the big offensive of the American Army in the Saint-Mihiel section, having the Rhine and Berlin as objectives if the Germans had refused the Armistice conditions upon which the Allies were agreed."

The Ambassador had previously written:

"In the last three months I had thought I reached my limit for hours of official work, but now President Wilson is leaving I find myself compelled to put in more hours than ever. Certainly such a mass of business has never been handled before by this Mission. One thing about the French has touched me deeply: it is that, in spite of all these press attacks upon the President, the French people have remained uniformly gracious and courteous towards my wife and myself. Not only have we never been exposed to a single moment of unpleasantness of any kind, but the welcome to us on all sides has been truly remarkable."

At an early period Wallace had realized that the Treaty, so far as it concerned his own country's sanction, was doomed. His special task, therefore, was to keep smooth the surface of the diplomatic waters and avoid what at any moment might become an irreparable breach between the two countries. In this task he succeeded. Despite the very intense feeling of disappointment which grew up in France over the non-ratification of the Treaty, no word of criticism was directed against the Ambassador. There was press abuse of President Wilson, abuse of America in general, but never once a word of abuse of America's representative in France. His whole attitude from first to last was a striking illustration of the principles of the League which his chief had designed and brought into being.

Not only was there no criticism in France but there was none in America of the Ambassador as he fulfilled his difficult duties during the transition period. When, at some future time, his country comes to take a direct part in international affairs, Wallace's really valuable diplomatic achievement will be seen in its true perspective.

Feeling they had played a noble rôle in stepping in at the moment of greatest crisis and saving the situation for the Allies, the American people at large resented the current accusations of shirking their full task. Their feelings were worked upon by disaffected Senators who had not been allowed to share in the framing of the Peace Treaty, and their bitterness might easily have precipitated a breach that would have taken many years to heal. In such a situation

HUGH C. WALLACE.
From the portrait by de Laszlo.

Wallace actually succeeded in appeasing the French and at the same time fully and truly serving his own country.

On January 16, 1920, the League of Nations came into being in the Clock Chamber of the French Foreign Office. But, alas, by that time President Wilson had been stricken down, the Peace Treaty had been rejected by the Senate and the official representative of the country whose chief executive had created the League was absent from the ceremony.[1]

Wallace felt this keenly—almost as keenly as the stricken President—and to him the day brought sadness.

"History [he had said, addressing a circle of his compatriots] will have much to say of Woodrow Wilson, the philosopher, the statesman, the idealist, and we who love him may confidently wait for the verdict of history."

He added:

"If I could define the inmost thought in the mind of the man who came to Europe to speak for America and has seen in the League of Nations the attainment of a great hope for peoples, it would, I am sure, be this:—The God who in the fullness of His wisdom and in His own good time has brought the nations together will not let them fall asunder." [2]

But although America was unrepresented in the League of Nations, it was otherwise with the Supreme Council, and afterwards the Council of Ambassadors, both of which Mr. Wallace regularly attended. With his colleagues on the former body, M. Clemenceau, Mr. Lloyd George and Signor Nitti, and later on the Council of Ambassadors, Lord Derby, Baron Matsui and Count Bonin Longart, Wallace was on terms of close friendship. The matters submitted to them for adjudication were numerous and difficult, but they belong

[1] The absence of American representatives was particularly remarked. Up to the last hour Ambassador Wallace was in doubt as to whether he would receive instructions to attend. Finally, hearing nothing from Washington, he returned to the Secretary of the Peace Conference the invitation that had been sent him.

It may be recalled that provision for President Wilson to summon the first assembly of the League of Nations was made in the Versailles Treaty itself. In signing the call Wilson did not act in his capacity as President of the United States.

[2] Speech of Ambassador Wallace, July 4, 1919.

more to the affairs of Europe generally than to France in particular.

Technically, because the Treaty had not been ratified, a state of war between Germany and the United States continued. This gave rise to a curious episode. The President of the Chamber of Deputies, M. Raoul Péret, gave a dinner to the Diplomatic Corps, at which one hundred and fifteen were present.

It so happened that the doyen of the Corps, Count Bonin, was absent in Italy and the next in order of precedence, M. Quiñones de Leon, was likewise away in Spain. Accordingly, Mr. Wallace took precedence. While the American Ambassador and Mrs. Wallace were greeting their hosts, the official Introducer of Ambassadors stated that the German Ambassador wished to meet his American colleague. The latter, in a low voice, begged M. de Fouquières to " forget the request." Two minutes later, however, it was again made. Mr. Wallace, raising his voice, said firmly : " I am unable to meet the German Ambassador." This naturally produced a sensation. The dinner-table was long, but very narrow. Seating himself, Mr. Wallace discovered his wife immediately across the table from him, on the right of M. Péret, and next to her the importunate envoy. It was an awkward situation; the whole company was alert to see what attitude the American Ambassadress would adopt. She did not turn her back upon him, but her head was directed steadily towards her left-hand neighbour, the President of the Chamber, throughout a conversation lasting an hour and a quarter. The German diplomat frequently sought an opening, but, while without any overt rudeness, there was never anything more than an occasional and uncompromising profile. " It was a triumph," said one who was present, " in the art of passive diplomacy."

Next day Ambassador Wallace was heard to remark that he feared to read in the papers that Senator Knox had proposed a resolution of censure upon him, there being at that time a move to arrange a separate peace with Germany ! But, of course, Ambassadors and Ambassadresses cannot give public or private countenance to one of their country's enemies !

The Council of Ambassadors was often the scene of curious, even emotional incidents. Once a controversy between Czechoslovakia and Poland took up the time of the Council for several meetings. It was finally decided to break the rule and permit the Prime Ministers of Czechoslovakia and Poland to come before the Council to argue their respective claims. Each was allowed an hour and a half. The first hearing was given to the Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia. Subsequently, a hearing was accorded to the Prime Minister of Poland; but the latter asked permission for his compatriot, M. Paderewski, to argue the case in his stead. When the famous musician-statesman had spoken for an hour on the subject in hand he launched forth passionately upon the woes and tragedy of Poland. This annoyed one of the Ambassadors who sat next to Mr. Wallace; he insisted that the speaker confine his remarks to the theme under discussion. The American Ambassador at once vigorously intervened. He called on his colleagues to join him in expressing the hope that M. Paderewski "would talk as long as he wished on *any* subject." They acquiesced, and M. Cambon, President of the Council, invited Paderewski to resume. But the Polish patriot collapsed into his seat exclaiming "I have done!" The interruption had shattered his inspiration! Afterwards Paderewski made several attempts to express his gratitude to the American representative, but as the question was still pending in the Council, Mr. Wallace declined to receive him privately, although Paderewski afterwards sent a message thanking his friend for his timely championship.

The personal intimacy of three of the Ambassadors, Lord Derby, Mr. Wallace and Señor Quiñones de Leon, became celebrated in Paris. Inseparable at so many gatherings, the trio were quickly recognized by the Parisian public, and the soubriquet of *Les Trois Mousquetaires* was applied to them. There is probably no other instance in diplomatic history of such close and cordial association, while it lasted, as then subsisted between the representatives in Paris of Britain, Spain and America.

Of Lord Derby Mr. Wallace, in a speech on the former's departure in 1920, said:

"We have sat next each other at more than eighty sessions of the Council of Ambassadors. We have had some hard fights. We have played a good deal together, especially at golf, and I have no hesitation in saying that our golf games have tended to the welfare of both our countries, for on the golf links we have straightened out many little complications of the Ambassadors' Council."

Among other business with the Quai d'Orsay, Wallace had for several months, on instructions from Washington, pressed for permission to remove the bodies of the American soldiers who had died in France. He had appealed to the Premier, Clemenceau, then also Minister of War, but that statesman had been unwilling to act in the matter. When his successor came into office the Ambassador at once went to see M. Millerand and told him of the situation. Feeling in America, he explained, was growing tense. If France did not act promptly within a week there would be a resolution introduced into Congress demanding the return of the American dead on the French soil. M. Millerand became convinced that action was really imperative, and action was taken forthwith.[1]

Meanwhile, a crisis was arising with regard to the Military Occupation of Germany, the French troops having advanced from the Rhine, and Wallace was without instructions as to American policy. The American forces at Coblenz were under the command of General Henry T. Allen, who, in March 1921, came to Paris to consult the Ambassador. On March 18 Allen wrote in his Journal:

"Under the present conditions of non-action by us on the Treaty and the recent accusation by President Wilson that France had fallen into the hands of militarists, our Ambassador has a difficult and embarrassing position. I went over the Rhine situation pretty thoroughly with him. The importance of team work at the present time was stressed, as well as the great value to the world, and to France in particular, that neither English nor American troops leave the Rhine now. I was asked my views concerning both France and Germany in a military sense, and also the views of Marshal

[1] Yet Mr. Wallace himself once said publicly, "Could I have my way, these graves would never be disturbed. The loving care of the French people has made them beautiful, and the peace which reigns here should be unbroken."—Speech at Suresnes, May 30, 1921.

Foch, as far as they had been made known to me during his recent stay, in connection with the working out of the problem of defence." [1]

Indeed, the Ambassador's counsel was constantly being sought by the American military as well as fiscal, economic and charity authorities, and the justness of his views has since been amply recognized.

Of Ambassador Wallace's many speeches in France, some achieve a high degree of dignity and emotion. Perhaps that which best deserves remembrance and attracted the greatest attention at the time of its delivery was his invocation to the Unknown Soldier at the Arc de Triomphe, May 29, 1921.

" Soldier of France! I speak to you, for you still have ears to hear. We praise you, but we can do you but little honour, for you are above and beyond all earthly tribute. Your resting-place, a hallowed tomb for you, is for us a shrine. Here your countrymen may come, as to an altar, to pray for France. Here they may imbibe patriotism from a never-failing source. The spirit which took you into battle was the spirit of France. The courage and devotion which led you on to the supreme sacrifice of life for home and country are at once a precious memory and an example to be followed by all who shall come after you. France will not perish while that memory lasts. We pray that wars may cease, but that is as God wills. *When France is threatened she will protect her own.*

" The world knows what it owes her, and her Allies will be faithful; but her chief defence is in her children. Inspired by you, they will do as you did. And as they march to battle the eye of faith will see above, and marching with them, that other legion—the souls of Frenchmen who have died that France may live!"

No wonder such eloquence as this evoked the praise of the Press. In the opinion of *L'Action Française* (otherwise none too friendly), " nothing finer has been uttered in regard to those who had died in the war."

" One cannot listen without trembling of one's whole being to the foreign orator come from the Far West to pronounce words little different from those which the ancient heroes

[1] H. T. Allen: *My Rhineland Journal.*

pronounced at the bank of the river Ocean before the ditch in which the blood of the black and white sheep had mingled."

"Such sentiments [declared *L'Intransigeant* on the speech] show us the height which French prestige and thought have attained in the world; they solemnly attest the pure idealism, the generous humanism which inspire the guiding spirit of the young American civilization. They honour France, to whom they are addressed, as much as they honour America, whose soul they reveal. In the torment which is shaking the world, is not the unanimity which unites the two great sister Republics in the higher realms of conscience a sign which shows the way—the star of confidence?"

After the presidential elections of 1920 Mr. Wallace, a Democrat, resigned his post, the resignation to be effective on the date of the new President's inauguration in March 1921. But at the particular request of President Harding he remained until the following July, when his successor arrived. This was a friendly gesture on the part of President Harding, and a tribute to Mr. Wallace that he rather than a Chargé d'affaires should complete the work he had begun and had conducted so successfully in the face of many and varied difficulties.

It may be mentioned that President Wilson withdrew various representations which he had established abroad, which it was known the Harding administration would terminate. Wilson, in fact, preferred to wind up his own work. Ambassador Wallace concluded that in Paris. But afterwards for the cordial relations between the two countries certain delicate readjustments were essential, and these Wallace also performed. When he left Paris it was all finished, to the extent that even the Conference of Ambassadors, at which he had sat amidst such brilliant diplomatic colleagues, became a mere formality. The labours of the Supreme Council, which he had shared with Lloyd George and Nitti, Bonin and Matsui, had been even more important, for they dealt with the vital situations of the world's peoples at the close of the world conflict.

On the eve of his departure the Conference of Ambassadors presented Mr. Wallace with a bust of Washington. The gift came from the French Government; but it was known

that the retiring Ambassador would decline it if coming from that official source, and this channel was therefore chosen by the grateful Ministry.[1]

"I leave so much of my heart behind me that I think I shall never again be heart-whole. No greater honour can come to me in after-life than to have been American Ambassador to France. It enabled me to represent in a country I love the land I love most of all."

He had "borne the brunt" of a great reactionary but momentary wave of prejudice against his own country, which had arisen out of the unplumbed depths of Europe's sufferings, and he had borne it with smiling courage and an unfailing tact.

"He made us feel," declared President Millerand, "that we had been wrong in our suspicions—that the great sister Republic of the West had not really ceased to love us."

Tributes to retiring Ambassadors are not, as we have seen, rare in diplomatic history, but another utterance of President Millerand deserves quotation here. It was at a farewell luncheon at the Élysée, attended by a distinguished company, including Wallace's diplomatic colleagues and four marshals of France.

"No Ambassador in a generation [said the head of the Republic] had played such an important and successful rôle. He had gained the warm affection of the French people and his own love for France had been made perfectly apparent by his words and actions."

"For the character of Mr. Wallace [wrote the veteran Jules Cambon long after the Ambassador's departure] I have always entertained the highest esteem. France and the United States have ever been joined by the bonds of an active sympathy, but naturally each country has different interests, a different handling of affairs and points of view. Mr. Wallace came to Paris at a most difficult moment; by his gracious bearing and high intelligence, he knew how to smooth out difficulties and maintain the close union with our country. He was, too, on friendly terms with Lord Derby, then British

[1] Mr. Wallace also declined the Grand-Croix of the Légion d'Honneur which was offered to him by the French Government. Later, as a simple American citizen, he was surprised and gratified at receiving in Washington the insignia of France's highest distinction.

Ambassador in Paris, and knew how to work with him for success in that common task which the Allies had pursued during and after the war."

The period is too recent to dwell here upon the second mission of the present Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Myron T. Herrick, who on July 16, 1921, took over the official representation of his country in Paris. Albeit, one feature stands out so conspicuously as to deserve mention. No longer will the American Embassy be an ambulatory institution. Not again will Secretaries of State have to endure the reproaches and a recital of the hardships and humiliations of almost every envoy sent to Paris in seeking a house at once commodious and dignified and within his means. The Embassy has at last a fixed home. Ambassador Herrick secured the mansion on the borders of Passy of the former President Grévy and Congress at last made an appropriation of $150,000 to purchase it as a permanent home for the Embassy.

In time to come this mansion may be the scene of many notable and picturesque events. A long line of distinguished Ambassadors and their gracious consorts may come and go within its precincts and the future historian accord to the building in the Avenue d'Iéna that special fame which is enjoyed by the British Embassy in the Faubourg St. Honoré. Already it has become celebrated in two hemispheres as the place of sojourn of the young pioneering aviator, Charles Lindbergh, when he made his astonishing flight in 1927 from New York to Paris and became the Ambassador's guest. That hectic week of Franco-American rejoicing and hero-worship will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

Whoever its future occupants and whatever its history may be, none can doubt that there will gather about the official mansion in the shadow of the Trocadéro which to-day harbours the archives, all the scattered memories and traditions of long-past figures who, in almost as many different mansions, represented their country in the capital of France since Benjamin Franklin established his Legation in the Hôtel de Valentinois a century and a half ago, and from thence negotiated the first Treaty of Amity between France and an independent America.

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